

DAVID'S

Blessed Man.

Or a short Exposition
upon the first Psalm, di-
recting a man unto true
and Eternal Happiness.

Wherein the Estate and Con-
dition of all Mankind is laid
down, both in this Life, and
that which is to come.

The Fifteenth Edition, profita-
bly amplified by the Author, *Samuel
Smith*, late Minister of *Prittlewell*
in *Essex*.

1 Tim. 4. 8. *Godliness hath the promise of the Life
present, and the life that is to come.*

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To the Reader.

Christian Reader, as it hath ever been the practice of wicked men, to make their prosperity an argument of Gods favour, reasoning after this manner : is it likely, that I should enjoy so many blessings from God, if my conversation were not pleasing in his sight, &c. Not considering that these common gifts are given alike, both to the godly man, and the sinner : And that *Esau*, though he was a man hated of God, yet enjoyed the fatness of the Earth as well as *Jacob*.

So the Children of God beholding the outward prosperity of the wicked, & their own miserable condition here in this life, have hereby been much troubled, and have been moved to call Gods judgments into question, how it could stand with his Justice, that wicked men should so abound in wealth, that rebelliously transgress. This proved a sore temptation unto *David*, in so much that his steps had well nigh slipped. And the same thing perplexed the Prophet *Jeremiah*, that he was bold even to reason the case with God

To the Reader.

saying, wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? and why are they in wealth that rebelliously transgress? Many of Gods servants are not a little affected herein, not understanding the reason, How the Lord will not suffer his children in this life to go unchastised for their sins, but thereby brings them to a greater measure of humiliation. As for the wicked, the Prophet assigneth a reason of their prosperity, namely this, that thou maist pull them out like beasts for the slaughter, and prepare them for the day of destruction. This truth is most clearly set down in the 37 Psalm: a portion whereof, I have handled in the Sermon following. My desire herein, is to comfort Gods people, that notwithstanding their present condition may seem to be miserable, yet the Lord doth ever uphold his in time of greatest danger, and of this they may be sure, that their latter end shall be peace. I wish thee comfort by it, and by all other holy helps. And so I remain

Thine in every Christian Office

Sam. Smith.

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A Prayer for the Morning.

A Prayer for the Evening.

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A short

A Short View and Method of the first Psalm, followed in this Exposition.

The Psalm hath in it two parts.

1. A description of all Mankind, divided into two ranks, Verse 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
 1. Godly, verse 1, 2, described two ways.
 1. By their virtues which are of 2 sorts.
 1. Negative, which are three.
 1. He doth not walk in.
 2. He doth not stand in.
 3. He doth not sit in, &c.
 2. Affirmative, which are three likewise.
 1. He Meditates much.
 2. The Object of his meditation, the Law of God.
 3. The time, Day and Night.
 2. By the recompence of their virtues.
 1. By a similitude of a Tree, described.
 1. By the nature of it, It is a Tree Planted.
 2. Property, It bringeth forth Fruit, &c.
 3. Contrary Property, Her Leaves do not fade.
 2. By the prosperous success of all he doth.
 1. By the nature of it, It shall prosper.
 2. Wicked, who are likewise described 2 ways.
 1. By their estate in this life two ways.
 1. Generally, it is not so with them.
 2. Particularly, But as the chaff, &c.
 2. By their estate and condition in the Life to come two ways.
 1. They shall not stand in judgment.
 2. Neither be associates with the just.
2. The chief cause of the happiness of the one, and the misery of the other two ways.
 1. For the Godly, The Lord knoweth the way of the Righteous.
 2. For the wicked, let them down by an Indefinite sentence.
 1. The way of the wicked shall perish.

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firſt Preached, and now
published for the benefit of
God's Church.

THE FIRST PSALM.

Verſe 1. *Bleſſed is the man that doth not walk
in the counſel of the wicked, nor ſtand in the
way of ſinners, nor ſitteth in the ſeat of the
ſcornful.*

CONCERNING the Book of the *Pſalms*, it is
an Epitomy of the whole Bible, teach-
ing us what we are to believe and do,
both to God and man: in which we
may, as in a Glaſs, moſt clearly behold
the Nature of Almighty God, his Wiſdom, Goodneſs,
and mercy toward his Church and Children; as alſo
moſt notable ſpectacles of his fearful wrath and ven-
geance againſt the wicked and ungodly.

If men would learn to pray unto God, and crave
for any mercy and bleſſings at his hands; Lo here be
excellent Plat-forms of true, hearty, and earneſt
prayers: If men would give thanks for bleſſings re-
ceived,

ceived, or for judgments escaped, or for deliverance from wicked and ungodly men, here be most worthy examples and directions. Again, if men would find comfort in temptation, trouble, and affliction, and learn with patience to bear them, there is no part of the Bible more sweet and comfortable, than this Book of the Psalms. And therefore it should be our delight and study, and we ought to spend the more time in the reading, and in the meditating of so excellent and worthy a Book.

This Psalm is set down before the rest, as a Preface to stir up every faithful Christian, to the diligent and careful study of the Holy Scriptures, and the blessed book of God as our Saviour saith; *Search the Scriptures, &c.* Because that will bring a man to true happiness in the end; namely, to know God to be his God; to know JESUS CHRIST, to know himself, and to direct him in the narrow way which leadeth unto life eternal.

This first Psalm is set down without any Inscription, and therefore it is uncertain by whom it was penned: whether by David, as most like it was, or by Esdras, who is rather thought to have gathered them together, and joyned them thus in one Volume or Book, as now we have them.

This Psalm doth teach us these two
The sum of worthy points; namely, how the God-
the Psalm. ly man lives and walks in this world,
what manner of life he lead on Earth,
and also what happiness, and blessedness is reserved
for him in the life to come in Heaven, verse 1, 2, 3.
The second part shews the contrary life of the wicked
and ungodly; as also what fearful vengeance and eter-
nal judgments are prepared for them, *ver.* 4, 5.

And the parts of this Psalm are two: In the former part is a description of the contrary estate of the Godly man and the wicked man: namely, that the Godly man is certainly blessed, and the wicked man cursed; in the five first verses. The other part shews the

the chief cause of the happiness of the one, and the misery of the other, *verse* the sixth : *Because GOD knoweth* ; that is, likes, loves, and allows ; yea, doth bless and prosper the way of the one, but he hates, abhors, and dislikes the way of the other : and God doth curse it, and make it most unhappy and miserable unto them : So that we see the Sum of this Psalm is this, that those are Blessed, whose way, that is, whose life and conversation the LORD loves, likes, and allows of, so as he doth direct and bless it ; But the Lord allows and takes care of the way of the righteous and godly man, therefore the godly man is blessed.

Now seeing this is the main Proposition of this Psalm, to prove, that the Godly are blessed : Therefore the Prophet doth first shew who he truly Godly, as *Verse* 1. 2. And then wherein their blessedness doth consist, *verse* 3.

The godly man is described two ways : First, Negatively, shewing what he doth carefully shun and avoid. *ver.* 1. Secondly, Affirmatively, shewing what he doth carefully embrace and follow, *verse* 2.

Concerning the things which the godly man doth ever carefully shun and avoid, they are here laid down to be three in number, by a most excellent kind of speech, laid down by the way of graduation, wherein the Prophet shews how men proceed by degrees to be wicked, for there is an increase and proceeding in sin, as we may see in every step of this graduation ; first, in the persons, secondly in the manner, and thirdly, in the fruit it self.

Three sorts
of wicked
men.

And indeed there is a variety and multiplicity of sins, and as they are divers, and of divers kinds, so the variety of number causeth a diversity of names ; *The Counsel of the wicked, the way of Sinners, The seat of the scornful* : For as one sayeth well ; there is a fruitful crop of sin, and there is none of the Sons of Adam, but may say with *Manasses* in his prayer, *I have*

have sinned above the number of the sands of the Sea.

First, (*He doth not walk in the counsel of the wicked*) where we see the persons are said to be wicked; the original word signifieth a man that is never quiet, but ever thinking or doing something that is evil, like the raging Sea, whose mind is ever troubled and tempted with evil delights and perturbations. By *Counsel*, he understandeth here the crafts and subtilties of the wicked, by which they push themselves forward, and labour to draw others to the like, according to that of Solomon: (*Prov. 40. 14.*) (*Prov. 1. 10.*) *My Son if Sinners entice thee, consent thou not; if they say, come let us lay wait for blood, &c.* So that the Prophet meaneth here, that he is blessed that joyneth not himself to commit sin with the ungodly, nor by himself doth commit the same, as sinners do.

The second sort of evil men, whose company he doth avoid, are called *sinners*; the word signifies such as not only are naughty of heart, and being seduced by bad Counsel, live in sin; but such as delight in sin, and have in them a constant and settled purpose to live in sin.

The third sort of evil men, whose company he doth avoid, are called *Scorners*. And they are such kind of wicked men, as being hardned in heart, do still confirm themselves in their wicked life, and get such a habit and custom in sin, that they shame not to make a mock of God and all godliness, and even to bleat out the tongue at Religion, and Christian piety; so that as they are wicked in heart, and lewd in life, so be they also hardned and confirmed in both of them: For by *Seat* he noteth fellowship and society with the ungodly.

Secondly, Concerning the Action, the first is, *to walk in the Counsel of the wicked*: (*Psalms 24. 4.*)

To walk, is to live and frame his life, to Their Actions affect and approve of the ways and described. counsels of wicked men, neither will he once listen, or lend his ear to the per-

perverse and naughty counsel of ungodly men, much less will he be brought to frame his life after their wicked wayes.

The second Action or proceeding of a sinner is *standing*; as the former is in heart to like, love, and approve of the wayes of the wicked, this is to obey them, and follow them into the same excess of riot; So that the meaning of the Prophet is, that a Godly man doth not like, love, nor follow that kind of life, or Conversation, which wicked men do use, and such as be given to sin, according to that of the Apostle, (*Rom. 2. 12.*) *Fashion not your selves like unto the world*, but doth by all means possibly shun and avoid it.

The third evil which the Godly Man doth most carefully avoid, is in these words, and *bath not sate in the Assembly of the scorers*: That is, will not be familiar, and have acquaintance with such as be mockers of God, and all good duties; he will not be their companion, nor keep them company, who do only profess impiety, who make a scoff at all Religion, scorn the word of God, and contemn the servants of God: These be the three evils which the godly man doth most carefully shun and avoid.

In the whole we may observe the wonderful growth that sin hath in the heart of a sinner; it stands not at a stay, but is ever growing, and never suffers any Winter-tide of blasting, but ever prospers: It first beginneth in the heart of a sinner, with a double walking, wandring as it were up and down, as being uncertain what to do: The next step that it maketh, is from *Walking* to *Standiag*, which signifies a determination after the former uncertainty, and where sin is not stayed, neither in the conception, nor in the birth, (*Jam. 1. 14.*) *When it is finished it brings forth death*, ever ending in hardness of heart, obstinacy of mind, and obduracy of both. Oh! that all wicked and ungodly men would lay this to heart, that making once Shipwrack of Faith, and a good Conscience, and wounding their souls by sin, this

this Spiritual Disease of sin grows daily to be more incurable ; and the more sin groweth to a head, the more the Spirit of God is quenched in a man, and the work of Grace is diminished. It behoves us all therefore to keep a diligent watch over all our own wayes, to cut off the occasions of sin, and to slay the beginnings of iniquity ; for a fire new kindled may easily be quenched ; when the Ship begins to leak, it may easily be stopped ; and at the first sin, and Satan may easily be resisted ; and we may with the less difficulty withstand the force of it ; whereas the more it is practised, the more the heart is hardened, and sin grows stronger, and the sinner himself weaker, according to that of the Prophet : *Jer. 11. 12. Can the Black-moor change his skin, or the Leopard his spots, then may ye also do good, which are accustomed to do evil.* And therefore to this end the Lord laboured with Cain, to stop his sin in the conception, or at least in the birth : When that he saw that his countenance was cast down, and that he had conceived some evil against his Brother, the Lord tells Cain, *if thou doest well, shalt thou not be rewarded ? if thou doest evil, sin lyeth at the door : q. d. Cain, Cain, be warned betimes ere it be too late, there is a reward that will follow thy righteous dealing ; but if thou go on to kill thy righteous brother, thou shalt find that thy condition will be far worse than now it is.* This is the woful and miserable condition of those that run from evil to worse, as it were adding drunkenness to thirst, and should be a warning unto us, to take heed, lest at any time we give any entertainment to sin ; *And so our last end be worse than the first. Mat. 8.*

The Godly Mans description, affirmatively.

In the second verse, the Prophet describes a Godly man affirmatively shewing what he doth most carefully embrace and follow : And as if he should say : He is a blessed man that abstains from evil

evil, if so be withal he delight to do good; so he do willingly yield himself to perform obedience unto the will of God, and conform all his thoughts, words and deeds to the will of God.

Now the good things which he must do, are contained in two words; first, *His delight must be in the Law of the LORD*: Secondly, *he must meditate therein day and night.*

But his delight:] that is, the Godly and Upright man, who is truly happy and blessed indeed, doth wonderfully love the *Law of the LORD*, that is the word of God, and that Heavenly Doctrine, wherein is revealed the will of God, whereunto all our Thoughts, Words and Works must be conformed, and which maketh known unto us the way to Eternal Life and Salvation.

Secondly, *In this Law he meditates day and night:* That is, the Godly man doth set his heart and mind upon the Word and Doctrine of God, so as he doth think often, and much muse upon it; it is his dayly meditation, so as he sets some time apart every day to study it; both to learn out of it how God must be purely worshipped, his own life ordered; as also to learn thereby how to maintain and keep faith and a good Conscience before God and man. And thus the Godly man is described by both parts of his life, his eschewing of evil, and his careful and religious performing of good duties.

Secondly, As we have seen a Godly man described, so now followeth wherein the happiness of this man consists.

This happy man is described two ways.

First, by a Similitude.

Secondly, by the prosperous and good success of all he doth.

The happiness of the Godly man is described by a similitude, whereby a godly man is compared to a Tree, which Tree is described:

First, by the place, namely, that it is a Tree
plant-

planted, not of its own growing. *By the water-side*, even by the fresh and springing Rivers; which is a resemblance of our ingrafting into Jesus Christ by faith, and the Spirit of God; so as we receive and draw juice and nourishment from him continually.

Secondly, it is described by an effect; namely, *That it brings forth fruit in due season*: And this is a resemblance of our regeneration, or of our obedience because the godly man, being ingrafted into Jesus Christ; doth by vertue of his Resurrection bring forth the fruit of faith and obedience, both to God and man; *In due season*, that is, in time convenient, (*Pf. 62. 12. Mat. 7.*) when it may best seem for the glory of God, and the good of our Neighbour.

Thirdly, By a contrary property, that *her leaves do not fall*: that is, in time of Winter and storms, her leaves fall not: And this is a sign of our perseverance, that the Godly man is not offended, nor daunted with crosses, persecutions, or afflictions, or any other calamity whatsoever, but doth by patience possess his Soul, and by faith wades as it were through-out all these dangers.

Secondly, The happiness of a Godly man, is described by that blessed success that God gives to all his affairs he takes in hand, *It shall prosper*, because he takes them in hand according to God's Commandment, and in his fear, with Prayer and calling upon the Name of the LORD; (*Joshua 1. 8.*) to the glory of God, and the good of his Neighbour.

In the second part of the Psalm; The wicked the Prophet describeth the most miserable and cursed estate of the wicked and ungodly, *verse 4, 5.* That it is clean contrary; that as their wayes and lives be contrary, so their reward is contrary.

The Prophet describing the cursed and miserable estate of the wicked, saith first, *it is not so with them*:
that

that is, that wicked and ungodly men are in a far contrary estate and condition ; they cannot in any case be compared to a Tree that is planted by the Rivers of waters, that brings forth her fruit in due season, and whose leaf shall not fall, neither do they prosper in their actions, neither doth God give success unto them.

but he setteth out the cursed and wretched estate of all wicked and ungodly men, by a contrary similitude, comparing them to chaff which the wind drives away : That is, even as Chaff hath no root in the earth, and wanting all juice and nourishment, must needs be fruitless and dry, so as the wind doth most easily scatter it away : Even so the wicked are not rooted nor grounded in Christ, whereby it comes to pass, they being utterly void of all grace of God's spirit, that they can bring forth no fruit of good works, neither can they persevere in time of temptation, whereby again it comes to pass, that they be carried away with every blast of vain Doctrine, and with the least storm of temptation, and blast of adversity, they are tossed to and fro : And when the wind of God's judgments shall blow upon them, they are clean scattered away. This is their estate and condition here in this life.

And for their estate and condition in that to come, the Prophet layeth it down likewise, *verse 5.* In these words: *They shall not be able to stand in judgment :* (*Rev. 6. 13.*) That is, they shall not be able to stand with comfort before the face of the Judge, but shall tremble and quake, as not being able to endure the angry countenance of the God of Heaven.

Neither is this all, but they shall likewise be severed and excluded from the blessed company of the godly : That as here in this life they could not abide a godly man, but did hate him, persecute him, and shun his company ; So at the last day (so just shall their reward be) they shall be separated from them ; and as Goats cast on the left hand, there to remain for evermore in torments, which are caseless and remediless :

remediless: Neither the sinners in the company of the just: that is, in the company of those that be justified and reconciled to God in Jesus Christ, which shall then inherit the Kingdom prepared for them.

Hitherto we have opened the first part of the Psalm, containing the estate and condition of a godly and a wicked man here in this life, and the life to come.

NOW followeth the second part of the Psalm, in the last verse, containing the confirmation of that Doctrine: And that our Prophet doth by shewing the efficient cause both of the happiness of the one, and the misery and wretchedness of the other.

The first efficient cause of the happiness of the godly man in these words: *Because the Lord knows the way of the Righteous*: That is, he likes, loves, and approves of it, so as he doth direct and bless it: And therefore it shall prosper.

And the cause why the estate of the wicked is unhappy, and *their way shall perish*, is, because the Lord doth not know their way: that is, he taketh no delight in the way, or in the life of a wicked man; he loves it not so as he should direct and prosper it: and therefore *it shall perish*.

And thus much for the meaning of the words: now let us come unto the Doctrines.

VERSE

VERSE I.

Blessed is the man that hath not, &c.

Blessed is the man, or Ob the blessedness of that man; or, as it is in the Original: Ob the blessednesses of that man! They seem to be the words of a man musing and meditating with himself, wherein mans blessedness should consist. As if he should say, some pronounce him blessed, that is, in honour: some count them blessed that have abundance of riches: some that live in pleasure: some place it in one thing, some in another. But ob the blessedness of that man, that fears the Lord, that is truly Religious. Of the Godly and Righteous man.

Doct. 1. Hence we learn this Doctrine; That of all men under Heaven, The Godly man alone is blessed, and the ungodly and wicked man is cursed; The Righteous man alone is a happy man in the sight of God, when the wicked is wretched and miserable. This Doctrine is very apparent in the Word of God: it is the scope and drift of the whole Scriptures to prove this one point, That the Godly man is blessed, and the wicked man is cursed. (Ps. 112. 1.) *Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, and delighteth in his Commandments. (Ps. 119. 2.) Blessed are they that keep his Testimonies, and seek him with their whole heart. Again. (Ps. 32. 1, 2.) Blessed is the man whose iniquity is forgiven, and whose sin is covered. Blessed is he to whom the Lord imputeth no sin, and in whose spirit there is no guile.* Read the seven and thirtieth Psalm, which seemeth to be penned on purpose, to confirm the everlasting truth of this Doctrine, That the Godly are blessed, and the wicked are cursed: and this blessedness of theirs doth not reach only to this life, but also to the life to come, according

to

to that of the Apostle; (1 Tim. 4. 8.) *Godliness bath not only the promise of this life, but also the life to come.* Yea, if we observe the method which the Spirit of God taketh in the course of the whole Scripture, it shall make this Doctrine so much the more apparent unto us; that is, that wheresoever there is a comfort laid down in the Word, the same comfort is still restrained to the Godly: As that of the Holy Apostle Saint Paul, in the eight Chapter and first Verse of his Epistle to the Romans: *There is no Condemnation; A marvellous comfort to hear that we are freed from that heavy and grievous curse which we had incurred by reason of sin: yet, lest the wicked should presume hereby, and take it unto themselves, unto whom in no wise it doth belong: The Apostle restraineth the Comfort in the same Verse, to them that are in Christ Jesus: And lest men should deceive themselves, to take this comfort to themselves, unto whom it doth not belong, he marketh them out, as it were in their foreheads, saying; They are such as walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.* The like of David, (Psal. 15) *LORD, who shall enter into thy holy Tabernacle? &c. He that hath clean hands and a pure heart, &c.*

Besides none are blessed but such as be in the favour of GOD, as the Prophet DAVID saith, *in thy favour is Life*, such as be reconciled to God, in JESUS CHRIST. As for such as be out of his favour, they be cursed and miserable, be they what they will be; Now only the godly man that is Humbled, that is Sanctified, that is Born anew, is he alone that is in the favour of God; therefore only the godly man is blessed.

Obj. Wherein stands the blessedness of God's Children, or a godly and a righteous man?

Ans. I answer in this, that a godly man that is hum-

humbled for his sins, is now reconciled to G O D, so as G O D the Father becomes his Father, adopts him to be his Child, loves him, and delights in him as his Child ; *Behold what love bath the Father given us ; that we should be called the*

Wherein the Godly man is blessed.

Sons of G O D : And hereupon comes the amiable and Love-titles that Christ giveth unto his Church ; *Open unto me, my Sister, my Love, my Dove, my Undeiled.* (Cant. 5. 2. Psal. 105. 12, 13. Deut. 7. 6. Psal. 91. 1, 2. 3.) Great are the affections of fervent love that Parents bear towards their Children, which none can expresse but they that feel ; and yet all their love is nothing in comparison of the love of G O D towards his Children ; this the Prophet teacheth, (*Es. 49. 15.*) *Can a Woman forget her Child, and not have compassion on the Son of her Womb ? Yet will I not forget thee.*

Another part of the happiness of a Godly man doth consist in this, that he hath assurance of the pardon of his sins, and that they are all done away, and shall never be laid to his charge, but are washed away in the Blood of *J E S U S C H R I S T*, according to that of the Prophet *DAVID*, *Blessed is he whose wickedness is forgiven.* (*Psal. 32. 1. Act. 1. 26.*)

He hath all his sins done away, Original and Actual, (*Ro. 8. 1. 1 Pet. 2. 24.*) with the guilt and punishment belonging unto them : (*Rom. 4. 5. 2 Cor. 1. 9.*) And all the Righteousness of Christ freely and fully imputed unto him, and so God is reconciled unto him, and approveth him as righteous in his sight : And thus the Apostle reasoneth : (*Herein was the love of God made manifest amongst us, because God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him : Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be a reconciliation for our sins.* (*Rom. 8. 33.*)

Another part of the happiness of a godly man doth consist in this, that he hath peace of Conscience, whereas the wicked and ungodly man hath a dead and sleepy Conscience, or else an accusing Con-

science. (Isa. 57.) *There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God :* But the Godly man that is reconciled to God

Pax est hæreditas Christianorum Aug. Ser. de temp. Perfecta & absoluta cuiusq; excusatio testimonium conscientie sue Ber. in **JESUS CHRIST**, hath the free pardon of all his sins, he hath sweet peace of Conscience, which doth not accuse, but excuse him to God ; yea, he hath exceeding great joy in the Holy Ghost, that he knoweth his sins are pardoned, according to that of the Apostle, *The Kingdom of God standeth not in meat and drink, but in righteousness, peace, and joy in the HOLY GHOST.* And indeed whom should he fear, or whereof

should he be afraid ? God is become his Father, the Angels are become his attendants, they pitch their Tents round about them, and have a charge of them : the Saints of Heaven and Earth are fellow brethren, the Creatures of Almighty GOD are their Friends, yea, their Servants, to do them good all their days.

The Devil, nor all the power of darkness shall not hurt them : *For Christ hath spoiled Principalities and Powers, and hath made shew of them openly, and hath triumphed over them upon the Cross :* (Psal. 37. 25. Psal. 34. 7. Psal. 91. 11. Hos. 2. 18 Col. 2. 15.) yea, that which is more, the LORD Jesus Christ, (to whom all judgment is committed) is become their Lord and Saviour. (Job. 5. 24.) *That they shall never come into Condemnation, but shall pass from Death unto Life.*

Lastly, The Godly man is assured that the Kingdom of HEAVEN, and Eternal Life belong unto him, and that he should be partaker of Eternal Glory, Life, and Salvation, and shall live in the presence of

Non arrogantia est, sed fides, &c. Aug. Ser. 8.

God, the Father, the Son, and the HOLY GHOST for evermore : and this assurance in the godly, is no presumption, but faith ; but every godly man hath in him the Spirit of

Grace

Verse 1. *Dauids Blessed Man.* 15

Grace and adoption ; and he that hath the Spirit of adoption, knows that he hath it, and is able through the same Spirit to say : (*Gal. 2. 20.*) *I live, and Christ liveth in me* . This was in *Job* when he said, *Rom. 8. I know that my Redeemer liveth, &c.* This was in *St. Paul*, *I am perswaded that neither height nor depth, &c.* In these and the like Priviledges stands the happy and blessed estate of Gods Children.

Use 1. The Use of this Doctrine is most excellent, for seeing the Priviledges of Gods Children are so great and so excellent ; that therefore they must needs be most happy and blessed : For howsoever the World accounts them miserable, *1 Pit. 1. 10.* grinning at them with their teeth, nodding at them with their heads, hissing at them with their tongues, and every way most contumeliously reproaching them with their words ; yet we hear how dear and precious they are with God, and in the reputation of Jesus Christ, who bought them at a price, and Redeemed them even with his own blood. *1 Cor. 3. 2.* *Behold what love the Father hath given us, that we should be called the Sons of God.* And for this cause the World knoweth you not, because it knoweth not him. God is become their Father, the Son their Redeemer, and the Holy Ghost their Sanctifier, the Angels their Attendants, the Scriptures their Evidences, and the Sacraments, Seals unto the same : This the Apostle teacheth, when he saith, *All things are yours, and ye Christs, and Christs GODS* : They are blessed then that are thus reconciled to God in Jesus Christ ; they are blessed that have their sins pardoned, and not imputed unto them ; they are Blessed that enjoy this sweet peace of Conscience, and Joy in the Holy Ghost ; they are Blessed that have attained to this assurance, that the Kingdom of Heaven, Eternal Life and Salvation shall be their reward : But the Godly man is partaker of all these : What then shall hinder his happiness?

Three sorts of men : First, the voluptuous man, who placeth his felicity and happiness in delights, pleasures, sports, and pastimes ; he loves, and likes them above all other things, and most

eagerly doth hunt after them : This is apparent in that Rich man in the Gospel, (*Luke* 12.) who had his Soul, eat, drink, and be merry, as if there was nothing else to be looked after, or as if mans chief felicity did consist in these things. (*Rom.* 4. 15.) And this was the case of *Solomon* in the dayes of his vanity, until he saw that all was but in vain. (*Eccel.* 1.) Let us then be careful we be not deceived with these sinful pleasures of this life, as to think therein we are happy : but let us take heed unto this hook of Satan, least we be taken within his snare. It is written to the everlasting commendation of *Moses* : (*Heb.* 11. 24.) that he refused to be called the Son of *Pharaohs* Daughter, and chose rather to suffer adversity with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, esteeming the rebuke of Christ, greater riches, than the treasures of *Aegypt* : for he had respect unto the recompence of reward.

The second sort of men here reprov-
 2. Ambirious. ved, are the Ambitious, that make honour and preferment their God, as if mans chief felicity did consist in that ; this is their care and study, how to climb up to preferment like *Absolom*, that sought to steal the hearts of his Fathers Subjects. And *Achitopel* that was so proud, that he could not endure a man in favour but himself ; and therefore when he saw *Hushai's* counsel received, and his rejected, went and hanged himself. (*Hist.* 4. 3.) So proud *Haman* was so vexed with *Mordcai*, that he could not be quiet till he had wrought his own destruction : and the reason of all, is this, prosperity puffeth up, and stealeth away the heart of man, (*1 Tim.* 6. 9.) making a man both
 to

to forget God and himself ; and therefore prosperity is a very dangerous and slippery estate, and howsoever it be much desired and admired, yet it is full of dangers, and hedged in with many perils : and howsoever many are drawn away from God through persecution and affliction, yet prosperity is more dangerous, for by it many more are drowned in sensuality, and even lulled asleep in carnal security.

The third sort of men here reprov'd, are the covetous Cormorants of the World, such as make *Gold* their God, love it, and delight in it more than God, as if their chiefest happiness did consist in the multitude of their riches ; (*Colos. 3.*) whereas indeed godliness alone hath the promise of this life, and that which is to come. And of all other sins our Saviour gives this caveat against this sin, saying ; *Take heed and beware of Covetousness* : (*Luk. 12. 15.*) and this is that which the Prophet *David* doth pray against, when he saith, *Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not unto covetousness.* (*Pf. 119. 36.*) Hereunto agreeth that example of the Apostle, *If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.* (*1st Jo. 2. 5. Mat. 14.*) So then, whether we consider that covetousness is the root of all evil, or that there is a flat opposition between God and the World, we must hold this as an evident truth, that there is no blessedness to be found in them.

Use 2. This may serve to reprove that cursed, yet common opinion of the World ; namely, that of all men the godly man is most miserable. We see here, that the Lord himself doth proclaim from Heaven, that he accounteth the godly man a blessed and happy man ; but yet the world, that is, wicked men in the world judge and deem the godly man wretched and miserable. Such a man as truly feareth God, hates all iniquity, disliketh lewd company, makes conscience of good duties, as to pray in his Family, to instruct his Servants, and Children, is diligent and careful to frequent Sermons ; this Man is an Owl amongst Birds,

whooted at, and pointed at, men reproach him, and of all men he is most contemned ; But as *Paul* saith, thus it must be, we are brought upon the Stage : we are made a gazing stock to wicked men, and accounted as dung for Christ's sake.

Use 3. This may serve to stop their mouths, that say, and think it is in vain to serve the Lord, that it is lost labour to be religious : that there is no good got by hearing of Sermons, and leading of a godly life ; it is, and hath ever been the cursed thought of mans heart, to think so, as in the time of the Prophet *Malachi* : (*Mal. 3. 14.*) *It is lost labour to serve the Lord, and what good comes there, by serving of God ?* So in these days it is clear men think it in vain to be Religious, to live godlily, and in all things to labour to keep faith and a good Conscience before God and men : But it is manifest here, that it is not

Note. in vain to serve God : nay, it is that alone that brings a man to happiness and true comfort here, and an eternal measure of glory in the World to come : and withal, this may serve to comfort every poor child of God, against all the discomforts and discouragements of the world by Satan and his cursed instruments : namely, that howsoever thy estate be never so poor in this World, and subject to never so many afflictions and troubles, (*Heb. 11. 11, 12, 13.*) yet if thou be a godly man, certainly then thou art blessed. Thou that art in Gods favour, thou that art reconciled to God in Jesus Christ, and hast thy sins and offences pardoned, eternal life belongs unto thee ; and therefore fear not, be not any whit discouraged, hold out unto the end ; certain it is thou art a blessed Man, and in so doing thou shalt have a Crown of life.

Use 4. Hence we learn, that as many as desire to be truly happy and blessed, may here behold the way to be happy and blessed. Wouldst thou be truly happy

happy and blessed here in this life, and hereafter in the life to come? wouldst be assured that thou art the child of God, in his favour, reconciled unto him in Jesus Christ, wouldst thou be assured of the salvation of thy Soul? Oh labour then to become a godly and Religious man, repent of thy sins past, amend thy life, walk before God in new obedience, labour to keep Faith and a good Conscience, hate every evil way, cleave unto the Lord, delight in his Word, let it be the joy of thine heart; then certainly thou shalt be blessed and happy for evermore.

Use 5. To conclude, if the Godly man be blessed then the wicked man must of necessity be cursed: If the estate of the righteous and religious man be so comfortable and blessed, then the estate of the wicked and ungodly must needs be miserable and cursed, according to that of *Moses* unto the *Israelites*, (*Dent. 28. 1.*) *if thou wilt not obey the voice of the Lord thy God (as obedience is far from a wicked man, howsoever he may come with Sauts painted Sacrifice, what follows) thou shalt be cursed in body, and cursed in soul, &c.* Again, (*Isa. 11. 21.*) *Thou hast destroyed the proud, and cursed are they that are from thy Commandments.* And this misery of a wicked man doth consist in these things especially.

First, That he can have no assurance that he is the child of God, that he is reconciled to God in Jesus Christ, or in his favour; nay, he may assure himself, that he is out of his favour, and that God hates him as his enemy, and that he will manifest his wrath and displeasure upon him, by plaguing him here in this life, and by damning him for ever, in the life to come.

Yea, the Lord begins that condemnatory sentence in the heart of a wicked man in this life: For every sin which a wicked man doth commit, there arise many times within his Conscience accusing thoughts:

And there is also a sentence within him given out against him presently after he had committed sin, there is a sentence within him gone out against him : by themselves judgment is gone out against themselves ; which sentence, albeit the wicked and ungodly man doth not mark, yet the voice of his own disordered affections crying out so loud, that he cannot hear this voice of his own Conscience accusing and condemning him : (yet many times in this life affection is silent, (*Dan. 5.*) as to *Balthazar* and *Judas*, (*Mat. 27.*) and then the conscience doth pronounce sentence against him with a shrill voice. If every wicked and ungodly man would judge himself by Gods Law, he should escape the judgments of God hereafter ; *Jeremiah* doth advise us to try our selves, and search our own heart, and examine why the Plague, Famine, or the Sword is sent amongst us ; for this we must know, that every calamity is a punishment sent from God for sin. Now if a Mans Conscience condemn him, God is greater than his Conscience, and will much more condemn him ;) but assuredly in the day of judgment it will cry aloud in the ears of the Lord, against the sinner for Judgment and Vengeance. And this is not the least misery under which the wicked Man remains, being out of Christ.

Secondly, He can have no assurance that his sins be pardoned, but rather may be assured, that his sins stand up in account against him, and that he shall be condemned for them. For it is that prerogative which belongs only to the godly man, (*Psal. 32. 1, 2.*) to have his sins covered. Even the blessed man : But as for the wicked and ungodly, the LORD is far from justifying them ; but their sins remain yet in Gods Book of Account, and shall assuredly one day be laid to their charge, (*Rev. 20. 31.*) when the Book shall be opened, and their horrible sins made manifest to the whole World, even to Men and Angels ; even those their most secret sins, which though they have committed never so closely in the dark, shall then come

come to light ; and they shall not have so much as one Fig-leaf to cover their nakedness, or one Friend to speak so much as one word to the Lord Chief-Justice of Heaven and Earth, but their own Consciences being as a thousand witnesses against them, they shall then be held even speechless, and the Lord will manifest upon them the fierceness of his wrath in that day.

Thirdly, He can have no peace of Conscience, *Esai. 57. For there is no peace to the wicked.* But alwayes carries about him an evil Conscience, that will never give him rest, but is as the flashing of Hell-fire unto him ; or else he hath in him a dead and sleepy Conscience, seared as it were with an hot Iron, that he feels not the weight and burden of his sins ; which judgment is no way inferiour to the former ! Oh miserable then is the state and condition of the wicked, that have no true peace in life nor death, nor after death : (*Mal. 3. Job. 5. Job. 24. 2. Jam. 5. 3, 5.*) For the LORD himself at the last shall be a Judge, and a Witness against them, *Moses* and the Righteous Servants of God shall be as Witnesses against them, yea, the dust of their feet that brought the glad tydings of peace, shall witness against them, the stones of the Field, the posts of their Houses, the Moth-eaten garment, all shall come in against them to hinder their peace with God : And their own Consciences, will they ; nill they, shall cry aloud, and say, *Righteous art thou, O Lord, and true are thy Judgments.*

Fourthly, He can have no hope, nor any assurance that he shall be saved, but is either carried away with a carnal perswasion or presumption, (which will deceive them in the end) their Consciences being seared, or else most justly fear that they shall be damned ; their Consciences being awakened. Now then if this be the fearful, and most woful estate of all wicked men that live in sin without Repentance, who then would live in such an estate of life to gain a Kingdom, in so great danger of eternal death and damnation every day they arise ? Why do not such repent and

turn unto God, that so they may be saved ?

Fifthly and lastly, if a man be out of Christ unregenerate, let him abound never so much in wealth, live in honour, bathe himself in Pleasures, yet remaining still in his sins, he can take no sound comfort in any of these : *Tit. 13. For to them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure, but even their minds and Consciences are defiled.* Their sweet savours and pleasant drinks are Gall and Worm-wood, their delicate fare is poyson, their costly Apparel is Menstruous Cloth, and their Life a Death ; and they shall one day answer for every bit of Bread they have eaten, as Thieves and Usurpers of those things that are none of theirs, for of proper right they belong unto the Godly man : And thus have we briefly seen wherein the wicked man is cursed and miserable.

That he doth not walk in the Counsel of the wicked, &c.

Here the Godly Mans Vertues be first set down by a Negative contestation in these words, *He that walketh not in the Counsel of the wicked* : Out of which we may observe that there is a Counsel of the wicked : And this is either private amongst themselves, or else publick with others.

Dott. The Counsel of sinful and wicked men, which is private in themselves, is a

There is a Rumination, or some other preparation, in every wilful and intended wicked, as of sin : And hence it is that the Schoolmen affirm, that *Consilium, actus, exitus*, must incurr in every wilful intended sin : And this is very apparent by the example of *Jesabel*, that when she perceived the King to be so heavy, (*1 King. 21. 10.*) for that he could not get the Vineyard of Righteous *Naboth*, she counselled

felled with her self, what she might do, to the end she might obtain it, and at last determined to write to the Governours of the City in *Ababs* Name, to proclaim a fast, and to cause *Naboth* to be brought forth before the Assembly, and stoned to death. This is clear again by the example of *David*: when he walked upon the Roof of his Palace, and had cast his eyes upon the beauty of *Bathsheba*, he did first take this counsel within himself concerning an enquiry what she was; secondly, sent Messengers unto her, to move her to lye with him: And lastly, committed the Act it self. This might be further cleared by the example of *Cain*, *Judas*, and all to confirm the truth of this point unto us.

Besides this private, there is a Counsel of the wicked, publick with others, as in the days of *OMRI*, (*2 Kgs. 6. 6.*) when Cruel and Wicked Statutes were made against the Lord and his people. So in the days of *Jeroboam*, (*1 Reg. 12. 28.*) how did he take Counsel, and at last concluded to make two Calves for Divine Worship, the one whereof he set at *Bithel*, the other at *Dan*? And in the days of *Nebuchadnezzar*, (*Dan. 3. 1.*) what a Decree was gone forth by the King, the Lords, and Nobles, touching the worship of the golden Image that was set up in the Plain of *Dura*, in the Province of *Babylon*? So in the time of our Saviour Christ, (*Joh. 9. 22.*) under the New Testament, the Jews had agreed together, that all that confess Christ should be excommunicated; and forbad the Disciples (*Acts 4. 18.*) from preaching any more in his Name, (*Mat. 26. 66.*) And in their Council was our Saviour Christ condemned to death.

Reason. And the reason is clear from the further manifestation of the truth of this point: For, as no man doth gather Grapes of Thorns, nor Figs of Thistles; so what other Fruit can be expected from such an unsavory Root, whose very minds and consciences are defiled; (*Tim. 1. 13.*) but that all their whole consultations and actions should be imputed unholy and unclean.

Use

Use. Hence then we may observe that the Doctrine of the Church of Rome, touching this point is most false : *That general Councils cannot err.* But we have cleared this before, that they may err, and do err ; for what should I speak of the second *Nicene Council*, which set up Idolatry, and gave Bodies to Angels and the Souls of Men : Councils therefore have been mislead, and may err.

Now the Prophet proceeds further, to shew who is a godly man, and what his properties, and teacheth us in these words, that the first step and entrance to the leading of a godly life, is to renounce the council and company of lewd, wicked, and ungodly men : whence we observe this Doctrine.

Doct. 2. That he that would preserve himself from sin, must carefully avoid all the occasions thereof : The wise man teacheth this Doctrine, *That he that walketh with the wise, shall be wiser,*

The occasions of sin are to be avoided. *but a companion of fools shall be worse.* This doth appear by the example of *Jonathan*, who by the Friendship and Familiarity which he had

with *David*, changed his life to a better ; whereas *Solomon* by society and conjunction with his Idolatrous Wives fell into Idolatry ; and *Rehoboam* by walking with his young Counsellors, and following their advice, became worse and worse : (*Pro. 1. 1. 1 Reg. 11.*) If then we would avoid evil, we must beware of all occasions, and no occasions more dangerous than evil company : every man therefore must take heed to himself, and beware how he joyneth himself with acquaintance with all men indifferently, least by their means he be corrupted. For every Man by Nature

*Mecum est quicquid
mibi nocere potest.*
Bernard med. 11.

is like dry wood, which is apt to kindle so soon as fire is put to it ; So, give a man the least occasion, and presently he yieldeth to sin : There needs not indeed

indeed any Devil to tempt us, but let the least occasion that is, be offered unto us, and straitway man becometh a tempter unto himself: And this is that which the Apostle saith, *Jam. 1. 14. Every man is tempted when he is drawn away, and enticed by his own concupiscence.* The Enemy by which we are overcome, is in our own bosom, that is mans natural corruption, which is fuel for the kindling of the fire of Satans temptations: This appears in *EVAH, Gen. 3. 6.* the Mother of us all, in the first transgression. First, she saw the fruit: Secondly, she conceived a liking of it: Thirdly, she desired it: Fourthly, she eat of it. *Dinah*, the Daughter of *Jacob*, wandring abroad, laid her self open unto sin, and so fell; which might have been prevented, had she avoided the occasions thereof.

And *David*, a man after Gods own heart, having set open the Casements of his Soul, his eyes, (by the which the Devil did easily wind himself into his heart) and beheld *Bathsheba* washing her self, *2 Sam. 11.* by and by he lusted after her, sent for her, and lay with her: So violent is Mans corrupt Nature in apprehending every occasion that might draw him to sin. It is therefore a point of great wisdom to discern between the deceit of sin, and the fruit of sin before it be committed; Oh flattering Enemy! in the action of committing so sweet as Poyson; after it is committed, a biting Serpent: It comes to a man with a smiling Countenance, as *Joab* unto *Amasa*, *Art thou in health, my Friend?* but withal strikes him to the heart, and wounds him unto death, *2 Samuel 20.*

Use 1. This Doctrine serveth for the reproof of those who are so far from the avoiding of the occasions of sin, as that they do freely, and of their own accord seek and follow after them; they will not tarry with *Joseph* till they be tempted by others, but they seek all occasions, and watch all opportunities

to tempt others : Never ravenous Beast did more eagerly pursue the Prey, than some do hunt after the occasions of sin, which is madness with a witness, as if the flesh were not prone enough of it self unto that which is evil, but that pains must be taken to help it forward to sin. Oh then how careful ought we to be to watch over our ways, and to avoid all the occasions of sin ! Counterguard thy heart, (saith Solomon) Prov. 4. 2. and keep it with watch and ward; look unto the Casements of thy Soul, thy eyes, and thy ears : Pray with *DAVID*, Psal. 114. 37. *Lord turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; make a covenant with them, with Job.* What folly, nay, what madness is it then, in them that dare come into any company, (*Ecc. 9. 14. Job. 31.*) that dare look and pry into the Company of a Woman, as though they were so strong that they were out of all danger to sin ? But art thou more Holy or strong than David, Peter, &c. If not, thou mayst fall ?

use 2. Let all Godly Men and Women take heed, let them fear themselves, and doubt the worst. *Blessed is the man that feareth alwayes, but he that hardeneth his heart shall not prosper :* We must at all times have especial regard to the heart, or else we cannot stand ; Such, and so many are the assaults that Satan doth lay against our Souls, this is that wholesome counsel that the Apostle St. Peter doth lay down unto us, who was both acquainted with the frailty of mans nature, and the malice of Satan, when he saith, *Be sober, and watch for your adversary the Devil, &c.* (1 Pet. 5. 8.) Where he joyneth unto Sobriety watchfulness ; for though a man be never so sober, yet if he do not watch withal, and that against the occasions of sin, he is easily made a Prey to Satan : And for want of this care and watchfulness, many of Gods Children have been taken, and have fell into many horrible and grievous sins, which they could

not

not so easily have done, had they been watchful over their own affections. And thus much for the first Doctrine in the description of a Godly man: who must carefully avoid all occasions of sin.

That doth not walk in the Council of the wicked, &c.

Here the Prophet *David* shews who is a Godly Man, and what be his properties. First (as we have heard) he avoids all occasions of sin: so now in the second place the council and company of lewd, wicked, and ungodly men: A Godly Man, and such an one as shall be truly happy and blessed indeed, doth distast and dislike, yea, utterly renounce, and abhor their society and company, their counsels and consultations, so as he doth shun and avoid them as dangerous and infectious: from whence we gather a second point of Doctrine.

Doct. 2. That men must carefully shun and avoid the company of the wicked, it is very apparent; if they themselves will not be defiled with them in abomination: for that rule of Solomon will stand, he that toucheth pitch shall be defiled. (Numb. 31. 6. 2 Sam. 10. 3, 4. Mat. 16. 8. Act. 13. Psal. 15. Tit. 2. 12. 2 Cor. 6. 4.) Bad company is exceeding pernicious and hurtful, either to disswade from that which is truly good, or to perswade to that which is naught and wicked. *David* maketh it the mark of a true Member of the Church, that in his eyes a vile person is contemned. And the Apostle willeth all Christians, who look for glory through Christ, that they would have nothing to do with the unfruitful works of darkness. And again, *This indeed is pure Religion and undefiled, to keep our selves unspotted of the World.* This the Apostle *St. Paul*

Paul urgeth ; Be not unequally yoked with Infidels ; for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness ? It is the exhortation of Solomon, Forsake the wicked, and ye shall live. Joseph no sooner in the Court of Pharaoh, but quickly learned to swear by the life of Pharaoh, and we know that it was in the common Hall amongst the Servants of the High Priests, that Peter had learned to curse and to swear. It were no less than treason in a subject to live in friendship with one that is a professed enemy to the King : Much more it is treason in the subjects of the King of Heaven, to have society with the wicked : and this is observed to be the fault of Jehosaphat, that he would help the wicked, and love them that hate the Lord ; Such are even odious unto God, (Psalm 5. 5.) as David saith, Thou hatest all them that work iniquity. Besides their company is exceeding dangerous ; for the wrath of God hangeth over the head of the ungodly. This we may see in Lot, who for the fruitfulness of the place was drawn to live in Sodom, where the men were wicked : So when they were taken Prisoners, Lot was taken Prisoner with them ; (Gen. 19.) And had not the Lord been exceeding merciful unto him, he had perished with them in the general overthrow of that City ; And this was the voice of God from Heaven concerning Babylon, (Rev. 18. 4.) Go out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues : And this was the cause the Lord gave so straight a charge to the people of Israel, that they should have no dealing at all with the inhabitants of the Land of Canaan, (Exod. 23. 32.) Thou shalt make no Covenant with them, nor with their Gods : Neither shall they dwell in the Land, lest they make thee sin against me : Neither shalt thou make any Marriages with them, neither give thy daughter to his son, nor take his son to thy daughter, (Deut. 7. 2.) for they will cause thy son to fall away from me, and to serve other Gods : and how true this threatening from the Lord was, the event maketh

keth it manifest; for they, neglecting this Commandment from God, (*Psal. 106. 35.*) were mingled amongst the heathen, and learned their works, as David saith; and woful experience doth prove this to be true of many, who have sometimes been indifferently conformable to good duties, afterwards falling into wicked and lewd company, have been corrupted, and grow dissolute: Oh what stumbling blocks are such unto a man for the performance of any good duty! This did David know full well, when he sad, (*Psal. 119. 115.*) *away from me ye wicked. I will keep the Commandments of my God:* Insinuating thereby, as may easily be gathered, that he could not set himself to the performance of any holy duty, as he ought, so long as such wicked company were about him. Yea, it hath been a grief unto the godly, to have been in the company of ungodly persons, as Lot living in Sodom, when he saw their filthy abominations, (*1 Pet. 2. 7.*) *It vexed his Righteous Soul;* And this was it that made David bemoan his estate in the time of his banishment, when he was constrained to abide among the uncircumcised people, *Wo is me, that I remain in Mesecb, and do dwell in the Tents of Kedar, my Soul hath long dwelt among those that be enemies to my peace.* By all this that hath been spoken it doth appear, that godly and virtuous men, who shall be happy and blessed indeed, do carefully shun and avoid the lewd company of the wicked.

Use 1. This Doctrine in the first place doth serve to reprove all such as are careless of their company; That can use as much familiarity, and shew as good a countenance to the worst, and make them as welcome as the best, be they what they will be, Papists, or Atheists; yea, let them be as prophane as Esau, he is notwithstanding for their company, but by this means they do little think that they do hazard both faith, and a good Conscience, and cause the godly themselves to suspect them, that they are prophane.

And

And indeed it cannot be otherwise, but if they themselves did make any conscience of sin, they would likewise make conscience of the occasions of sin, whereof what can be worse than lewd company, who are ready to make a mock at every good duty; and whose nature is to have other men to run into the same excess of riot with themselves? (1 Pet. 4. 4.) yea, when a man or woman hath some good things in them, as to love the word of God, to like of Gods faithful Ministers, to delight in prayer, &c. In comes a wicked man, and breaths out his poyson, seeking by bad counsel and lewd persuasions to dissuade them, and draw them back: Oh! you love the Minister too much, he will make you precise, you need not to take such pains but take your liberty; what need you be afraid of them? Oh, when such wretches step in, and thus pour out their lewd counsels and persuasions, what do they else but draw men to perdition, especially when they do deal with such as be but young Christians, coming on in the ways of Godliness. And when they speak that to great Personages, who by nature are most inclined to liberty. O what lets are they to a young Christian in the way of godliness?

And when the Lord leaves a Man or a Woman to listen to such cursed counsel, it is a great sign that the Lord loves them not. So it is said that the Lord left *Abfalom*, that he should not receive the good counsel of *Achitophel*, because the Lord would destroy *Abfalom*. So it is said of *Reboboam*, that he listened only to the counsel of his young men, because the Lord would bring his judgments upon the house of *Solomon*.

Use 2. This should admonish all men to take heed of such kind of men, as the very limbs of the Devil, and the Messengers of Satan, who seek to draw men from God, and from Jesus Christ, and from a Godly life; to stop our ears at their lewd and damnable coun-

counsels, not to hear them, nor to listen to them : yea, if it lye in our power to remove them, and to banish them our presence, as the greatest enemies of our souls, and the Messengers of the Devil seeking to pervert and poyson our poor souls, to put our mouths out of taste, and to make us dislike those that are sent of God, who ought to be most dear unto us.

Object. It will be here objected, whether it be not lawful upon some occasion to be in their company, or to have dealing with wicked men ?

Answer, In some case it is lawful, as thus ; First, that it be only for necessity : as that we cannot avoid it, in ordinary matters of this life, unless we should go out of this world : Secondly, that we have a due calling thereunto : Thirdly, that we be not silent at the committing of sin, but that ever we shew our dislike of their vain courses ; and lastly, that we labour with our selves to be grieved at their sins, as Lot was at the *Sodomites*.

In the Counsel of the wicked, &c.

HERE the Original word signifies such wicked men as are never quiet in their minds, but evermore musing and devising some mischief, which they may utter and practise, as occasion serves.

Doct. 3. And in this, note the very property of a wicked and graceless Man : He is never at rest, but still plotting and devising some mischief against God, or good men : This we may see by divers examples, (*2 Sam. 16.*) *Achitophels* Counsel was esteemed like as if one had asked counsel at the Oracle of God, The like we may see in *Herod*, (*Mat. 27.*) when he

Wicked Men are ever devising of mischief.

heard

heard of the Birth of Christ, as of a new born King : What policy did he use to destroy the Saviour of the World ? (*Mat.* 26.) The Scribes and Pharisees, how carefully did they consult, and take counsel together against Christ, to put him to death ; yea, they brake their sleep about it. When the *Jews* could not endure *Jeremy* to Preach plain, (*Jer.* 28. 18.) and to tell them of their sins, they therefore by and by say thus ; *Come let us devise, and imagine some mischief against the Prophet of the Lord, let us smite him with the Tongue. Let us take no heed, nor give any ear to his Preaching.* (*Hesl.* 3.) So *Haman* deviseth how to put *Mordecai* and the *Jews* out of favour, by devising a most vile accusation. (*1 Sam.* 22. 9.) So *Dog* that black mouth'd dog, devised how to accuse *David* to *Saul*. So those wicked Rulers did devise to invent some mischief against *Daniel*. And the Prophet *Micah* sheweth that it is an old practise of the wicked man, to devise wicked things. In the Primitive Church the enemies of Gods children, that persecuted the Christians, devised this shameful slander, that they Worshipped an Asses head, &c. So in these days it is manifest, that the Devil stirs up wicked men to accuse Gods children, to devise slanders and false accusations against them : The Devil hath one *Dog* or other to accuse *David* to *Saul*, to thrust him out of his favour, and to bring him into disgrace : And when as they have nothing justly against them, then they begin to devise how they may raise up some false report or other, to smite them with their Tongues.

And the reason of this is, because they are foolish and ignorant : For they not knowing the Lord, nor understanding his ways aright, but being in this respect worse than the Oxe that knoweth his owner, (*Esay.* 1. 2.) and the Ass that knoweth his Masters Crib, (as the Lord doth complain of them) they cannot but do as *St. Paul* did in the time of his ignorance, even oppose themselves against God and his Children.

And

And for this cause the Lord doth make his moan for the foolishness and ignorance of his people, as the well-spring of all their rebellions against him, in these words: *For my people are foolish, they have not known me, they are foolish children, and have none understanding: They are wise to do evil, but to do well they have no knowledge.*

Use 1. Seeing we are taught here, what is the nature of wicked men, namely that they have in them a restless desire to pervert the ways of the godly, and to design some mischief: This must teach us first of all to deal wisely and warily with them, lest we be corrupted by them: We are here set as upon an Hill, or a Stage; and professing Jesus Christ, a small spot will be seen in our Garment. It behoveth us therefore to be as wise as Serpents, and as innocent as Doves, (*Mat. 10. 16.*) to the end we may stop the mouths of gain-sayers, and cut off occasions from them that seek the occasion. And to this end we must evermore be mindful in our Prayers, to pray unto God, to be delivered from them: for unless we be armed from above, we shall easily be overtaken by their assaults, and through the corruptions of our own hearts, which are prone to all sin. They deal warily and circumspectly, they work by all means to pervert our wayes, and to make us two fold worse than themselves, the children of Satan. How much more careful ought we to be to prevent them? which we shall do the better by shunning the occasions of sin.

Use 2. Secondly, we are taught here if we labour to be the Disciples of Christ, (and to be Blessed) what entertainment we shall find in the world; namely to have wicked and ungodly men to stand in our way and hinder us, as they did stand in *Zacharias* way when he went forth to see Christ. (*Luke 19. 13.*) If thou be once in Gods presence, and dost begin to call

call upon him for mercy, they will rebuke thee, as they did the poor blind man in the Gospel, (*Luk. 18. 39.*) if thou be sick, yea dead in trespasses and sins, and Christ doth begin to come home to the house of thy soul to heal thee, and to raise thee up from the death of thy sins, they will stop his passage and entrance in, if possibly they can : as they did when Christ came to the Rulers Daughter which was dead : But as Christ turned them out of Doors, saying, *Get ye hence,* (*Mat. 9. 23.*) so must thou shake them off, and not Communicate with flesh and blood, in matters that concern Eternal Life, and the Salvation of thy Soul : For if thou do, thou canst never be saved : neither must we look after the love and liking of the world, nor hang upon men for their applause and favour : for where there is not the fear of God, surely such men are most unconstant in their wayes, turning upon every small occasion, yea, and the love and favour of such men must needs be bent towards the worst, seeing themselves are bad, and set themselves in no good way : Remember what Christ said unto his Disciples : (*John 15. 19.*) *If ye were of the world, the world would love his own, but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you.* Wherefore as they that run at tilt, look not to the vulgar people what they say, but to the Judges : so, care not thou for the world, but look ever what the judge of Heaven and Earth doth allow and approve of.

That hath not walked in the counsel of the wicked. By Counsel he here meaneth the subtilties and crafts of the wicked, by which they push themselves forward, and labour to draw others to be like unto themselves. according to that of Solomon : (*Prov. 11.*) *My son, if sinners entice thee, consent not unto them.* From whence we gather a fourth Point of Doctrine.

Doct. 4. Namely, that it is a most horrible and grievous sin to give evil counsel. To commit sin, is that which highly offends the Majesty of God, and draweth down upon us all punishments both temporal and eternal; but to counsel others to commit sin, is the very height of sin.

To give evil counsels, an horrible sin.

This is noted in the Scripture to be the sin of *Jezebel*, (1 *Reg.* 21.) who was a furtherer of *Ahabs* wickedness: for when he could not by any lawful means attain the Vineyard of *Naboth*, she said unto him, *Doest thou sway the Scepter, rule the Kingdom, and manage the State? arise, and eat bread, I will give thee the Vineyard.* This was the counsel of *Achitophel* unto *Absalom*, fearing his reconciliation to his Father *David*, and therein his own just confusion; he gives such counsel whereby he might take away all hope of agreement: (1 *Sam.* 16. 21.) *Go in to thy Fathers Concubines, which be bath left to keep the house; and when all Israel shall hear thou art abhorred of thy Father, the hands of all that are with thee shall be strong.* This is likewise set down by *Solomon* in the *Proverbs*, where he expresseth the sin of seducers, saying, *Come with us, let us lye in wait for the blood of the innocents, we will swallow them up alive, like a grave, even whole, as those that go down into a Pit;* (*Prov.* 1. 11.) *cast in thy lot among us, we will all have one purse, their feet run to evil, and they make haste to shed blood.* And this doth appear in the brethren of *Joseph*, when they purposed the overthrow of their Brother: (*Gen.* 47. 10.) *Come (say they) let us slay him, and cast him into some pit, and we shall say, a wicked beast hath devoured him.* And this appeared to be the malice of the high Priests and Elders of the People, who moved the people to desire that *Barabbas* might be delivered, (*Mat.* 27. 21.) rather than *Christ*, and perswaded *Judas* for a sum of money to betray him, (*Mat.* 28. 12.) enticed the *Souldiers* with a great sum of money, to noise it abroad, that

that His Disciples came by night, and stole him away while they slept. All these Testimonies, and many more, may serve for the confirmation of this Doctrine, that it is a most horrible and grievous sin to give evil counsel.

Use 1. Seeing that it is a most great and grievous sin, to give evil counsel, this teacheth us our duty : That whensoever they shall set upon us, to draw us away from God, that we be careful that we consent not unto them : It is not enough for a man to say, alas, I devised it not, neither am I the first that have committed the like ; for this shall excuse no man, that he was not the Author of an evil : For surely, if it be so great a sin to seduce, it is no less sin to be seduced, and God will one day find them no less guilty, but shall partake with them of the same punishment. If a man should have about him a great sum of money, or other treasure, and should willingly and wittingly put himself into the company of thieves, and will be drawn by them out of the way : were this Man to be pityed if he should lose all that he had ? even so it is with a Christian that doth carry daily about with him a rich Treasure, his Soul and Conscience, which he must keep unspotted of the World ; if he listen to the charms of the wicked, and will be drawn out of the way of Gods Commandments, to commit sin, and to make shipwreck of Faith, and a good Conscience : Is it not just with God that this man should perish for the same ? So then we see it standeth us in hand to beware of consenting to sin, and counselling others to commit sin ; For if we give our consent unto them, we are partakers with them in their wickedness, and shall be sure one day to have share with them in their punishments.

Use 2. Secondly, seeing the giving of evil counsel is so evil a sin, both in him that doth counsel another, as also in him that consenteth unto it, then we must
care-

carefully shun and avoid both : yet this is not all, but we must also seek for the society of the godly, that all our delight may be in them : We must by all means joyn our selves in friendship with them, and make much of their Assemblies ; *For with the upright thou shalt learn to be upright : (Prov. 31. 20.)* This *Solomon* teacheth us. *He that walketh with the wise shall be wise :* It is indeed a rare thing to find a man that will counsel others to follow Godliness, and therefore such as do, are much to be respected ; love him as the dearest friend that will direct thee in the ways of salvation, and be a guide unto thee in the path that shall lead unto life. Let it be far from thee to be ashamed to follow the counsel of such as are discreet and godly ; it is not material who they be, whether our superiours or equals, or our inferiours ; for the Counsellor is not so much to be regarded as the Counsel. If it be holy, just, and good, receive it as from God, who thus speaketh unto thee by his servant ; If it be evil reject it, as coming from the Devil, who speaketh by his instruments.

That hath not walked, &c.

THe last thing that we have now to consider out of the first part of the description of a Godly man, is this, *He hath not walked, &c.* By walking, the Prophet *David* here meaneth (according to an usual Metaphor in Scripture) a common usual course of a Mans behaviour, or his ordinary trade of life. And the word which is here used, is rendred in a terse or which in thy own tongue noteth a continuance of walking, even all the dayes of their life : For other wise who can say, his heart is free, but that at some time or other, the Counsel or bad example of the wicked hath prevailed with him ? but that is not meant here in this place ; when a man hath withdrawn himself from their lewd Conversations, and

betaken himself to the wayes of Gods Commandments. From whence we gather a two-fold Doctrine : First, that the falls, slips, and infirmities of Gods Children are many and great, which many times they fall into, and yet cannot properly be said to walk in them, because they rise daily out of the same. And secondly, That to walk, it is said of the godly, in respect of Gods Commandements, because as it is in the second Verse, *There is their delight.*

Dott. 3. It is most true, that there
The fall of are the seeds of all sin whatsoever,
the Godly are naturally, rooted and inbred with
many. us, which if they be not prevented,
 are ready to break out upon any occasion that shall be offered : And howsoever the godly do desire to please God, and endeavour to serve God in truth and sincerity of heart, yet they do often stumble in their race, through the burden that presseth down, and the sin that hangeth on so fast, This Truth is confessed by Solomon in his worthy Prayer at the dedication of the Temple : (*Reg. 8. 46.*) *If any man sin against thee, for there is none that sinneth not, if he turn again with all his heart, &c.* Again, (*Job 15. 1, 4.*) *What is man that he should be clean, and he that is born of a woman, that he should be just ?* Again, (*Psal. 14.*) *All are gone out of the way, they are all corrupt, there is none that doth good, no not one.* Most woful and fearful was the fall of David, as the Scripture hath recorded it. It may seem very strange, that a man as David was, even after Gods own heart, (*2 Sam. 11.*) could possibly fall so far as he did : For if we consider the circumstances and degrees of his sin, it will appear, that (sin al impenitency excepted) a reprobate could scarce commit a greater : For, first he committed Adultery with Uriahs Wife ; when this was done, he glavereth and flattereth with the Womans Husband, and bade him go home to refresh himself with his Wife, think-

thinking thereby to father the bastard on him : when this succeeded not, he went further, and unto his Adultery he added Murther, that he might bear as the grief of it in his heart, so the shame of it in his forehead : and in this he wrought worse than *Jezabel*, for he makes *Uriah* the Messenger to carry the Letters for his own Execution. What shall I say of *Noah*, of *Lot*, *Peter*, &c. I need not to stand in this Doctrine, seeing woful experience in all the godly doth prove it to be true.

Use 1. It may teach us that we be not too rash in judging and condemning our Brethren : We see by this that hath been delivered, that the dear Child of God may fall most grievously and lowly, and yet be restored again to the favour of God, because he doth not walk on in sin, as the wicked do. But whensoever through the temptations of Satan, or the frailty of his own flesh he falls into sin, forthwith with *Peter* he goes out of that sin, and weepeth bitterly for the same ; and therefore as *St. James* saith, Chap. 4. Verse 12. *Who art thou that judgest another man ?* We may not set bounds and limits to Gods Mercy, to say that any finally shall be damned, howsoever a man may be in the state of damnation for a time ; this were to sit in Gods Chair : Let us all acknowledge our selves to be but Men, and let none usurp the Authority of Gods Judgment. Let us therefore consider what we our selves are, before we cast our eyes upon other men ; for they are the most sharp and severe Judges of their Brethren, that forget their own infirmities : And I doubt not but all the Children of God do know by experience in themselves, how hardly sin is subdued and mastered in them ; how many sighs and groans it requireth, how many Prayers and Tears it doth cost them : What a striving and struggling they have within themselves to keep it under, and yet for all this, it is very hardly subdued : So that the knowledge of our own weakness, and un-

worthyness must arm us with meekness towards our Brethren.

Use 2. By the rule of this Doctrine we are admonished to be very wary and circumspect over our selves : Did David fall, did Lot, Noah, Peter, &c. fall ? Oh ! whither shall we fall if God do but a little leave us to our selves ? Who dare presume of his own strength and worthiness, when such worthy pillars as these have been shaken ? Yea, the lamentable shipwreck of such men as these may make us to fear a Tempest before it do come. It is the Devils crafty counsel and subtile policy, to make us over-wean our selves, and to make us boast, and presume of our selves. For the Devil doth know full well, that this lifting of a man up, is the very next way to tumble and throw him down, as Solomon saith, *Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty Spirit before the fall,* (Prov. 6. 18.) And therefore acknowledging our own want of strength, and our own inability to stand without the assistance of Gods spirit ; let us not be *high minded, but fear,* (Rom. 11. 20.) And thus we have seen that the falls and slips of Gods Children are many and great, which notwithstanding cannot hinder their happiness, because they walk not in them ; that is, they make it not their continual practice to live and delight in sin,

D. 2. 6. Now we are come to the second, which

*A Godly man
doth ever walk
with God.*

doth note unto us that the godly man, who shall be truly happy and blessed indeed, is far from making his life a life of sin, as that he doth rather in the whole

course of the same, walk with God in obedience.

For therefore indeed is our course of new life compared to a way, to shew that the godly must always be walking in it from the beginning of their course unto the end of the same. It was the commendati-

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ons of *Enoch* and *Noah*, (*Gen. 5. 22, 6, 7.*) that notwithstanding the dayes and times wherein they lived were dangerous, yet *they walked with God* : That is, they considered more the Commandments of God, what he had appointed, than what was practiced ; and desired rather to be approved of God through their obedience, than through their disobedience to purchase the favour of men : It was the charge given by God unto *Abraham*, *Walk before me* : (*Gen. 17.*) That is, let it ever be thy care, that seeing I am present every where, and privy to all thy Counsels, that thou walkest as in my sight. And this was the best Testimony that *Solomon* could give of his Father *David*, (*1 King. 3. 6.*) that *he walked before God in truth, and in righteousness*. Yea, this did Minister comfort to godly *Ezekias*, when he thought he should dye : (*Esay. 38. 3.*) *Remember O Lord, that I have walked before thee in truth* : And to this agreeth that of the Apostle *Paul*, (*Phil. 3. 12.*) *Who forgot that which was behind, and endeavoured himself to that which was before, and followed hard towards the mark, to the price of the high calling of God in Jesus Christ*. He was not like unto a vain and foolish man, who running in a race, will be ever and anon looking back, to see how much ground he had rid ; but his eye was alwayes upon the mark or goal, to consider how much he had to run, how far off he was from perfection, (*Mat. 24.*) and what he had more to do in his Christian course, that he might finish the same with joy, It is the end that makes us all ; (*1 Cor. 9. 24. Rev. 2. 7. Rom. 13. 12. 1 Pet. 19.*) *He that shall endure to the end shall be saved*, Our Saviour saith not there, that he that endureth for a season, but he that continueth to the end ; not every one that fighteth, but he that overcometh, shall receive a Crown of life ; These examples do shew us how the godly have walked. And these, and the like Precepts teach us, we should walk so as in the end we may be blessed.

Use 1. Hence we are taught this lesson, that we must never be weary of well-doing, seeing that perseverance only hath the promise of reward; we must not depart out of the *Agypt* of sin, and then with the *Israelites*, and with *Lots Wife* look back to the *Sodom* of their sins, but remember that thou owest unto God all thy dayes: (*1 Thes. 3. 13.*) *The trees planted in the Lords house, bring forth fruit in their age: (Psal. 92. 13.)* And they, which do not so, *shall be hewn down, and cast into the fire. (Mat. 3. 10. Rev. 19.)* It was the commendation of the Church of *Thyatira*, *That her works were more at last than at first.* A reproof of their folly, who having kept the path of Righteousness for a time, do after walk in no good way, but think with one jump to leap into Heaven, with a, *Lord have mercy on me, at the last:* But know, O thou vain man that thou must walk in the way; that is, thou must use all good means for the attaining of life and salvation, thou must hear the word diligently and carefully, pray, read, &c.

I doubt not but the serious thinking upon this, that God challengeth every day at our hands, yea, all the dayes of our life to be spent in his service, will reform many corruptions in us: For alas, the care of the most, is how they may keep credit with men, though they purchase Gods displeasure, which will then stand such in little stead, when all things shall come to receive their due tryal: (*1 Cor. 15.*) *Even every work done in the body, whether it be good or evil.* And thus much for the first part of the description of a godly man, Negatively: *He doth not walk in the counsel of the wicked.*

Nor stand in the way of sinners.

THat is, a godly man doth not settle himself to live as wicked men do, nor frame his life after their lewd example; where we are to observe two points: First, that there is a way of sinners, in which the ungodly stand. Secondly, that the godly stand not in it.

The second part of the description of a godly man negatively.

Doct. 1. First then, that there is a way of sinners, in the which they stand and live, it is very apparent, called in the Scriptures by divers names; as by the name of the way of the ungodly: *The Lord knoweth the way of the Righteous, but the way of the wicked shall perish.*

It is termed an evil way, *The way of the wicked, a wicked way, &c.* And by these wayes we are still to understand the course of Life, and Conversation of the wicked, wherein we are taught this Doctrine, that notwithstanding all the means that God and Man doth use to the contrary, the wicked man will still persist, and go on in sin, which is here understood out of the word *stand*, (*Gen. 3. 6.*) This appeareth in the example of *Cain*, albeit he were admonished and reprov'd of God for his Wrath and Malice conceived against his Brother, yet for all that *Cain* will please himself in his own way, and never rest till he have shed the innocent blood of his own Brother. This is seen likewise in the example of the old World, when the Lord saw that the wickedness of Man was great, and all the imaginations of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually, and how they pleased themselves in their way, (*Gen. 6. 5.*) the Lord stirred up *Noah* the Preacher of Righteousness, who warned them from God; yet they would

Wicked men described.

continue still in their own wayes, giving themselves to nothing but eating and drinking, and all excess, till the flood came and swept them clean away. This is clear likewise by the example of *Pharaoh*, (*Exod.* 9. 19.) on whom all means were assayed for his Conversion: for what could the Lord do unto him that he did not? He sent *Moses* and *Aaron* unto him, warning him from God to let the people of *Israel* go; and to that end sent judgment upon judgment, one upon the neck of another, even terrin number; yet for all this, *Pharaoh* chose rather to continue still in his own way, and would none of the Lords. So it is in that saying of *Solomon*: (*Prov.* 27. 22.) *Bray a fool in a mortar, yet will not his foolishness depart from him.* And no marvail, for the spirit of slumber hath so covered their eyes, that they cannot see; and their hearts are so possess'd with spiritual Fornication, which makes them thus to go a whoring from God, (*Act.* 7. 51. *Elay.* 6. 3. *Ez.* 13. 3.) even haled with the fury of their own affections, snared of the Devil, and taken of him at his will: O miserable and unhappy condition! fearful is the wo that lyes upon all those that thus walk in their own wayes. For most certain it is, that they who are Christs have Crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts, so far as that they have made choice of the Lords way, howsoever many times they may stumble and fall in walking therein. But of the wicked, it may truly be said of them, *the way of peace have they not known.*

Use 2. We heard before, that we ought not to proceed so far with any, as to judge of their final estate and condition; for that were to sit in Gods Chair, and to take his office upon him. Yet, to say of some, that they are in the state of damnation, and (unless they repent) shall perish for ever, doubtless this is not unlawful: for as love bids me not to determine too soon; so not to be abused too late. God bids me look upon the Tree, and judge of the fruit.

I may say, thou art in the state of damnation, for I see thy heart through thy hand : But whether thou shalt be finally damned, there I leave thee : for God may have mercy upon thee upon thy last Repentance. I may come to a tree, and say, *Here is little fruit* ; or *here is no fruit*, or, *here is bad fruit* : but I cannot say, *Never fruit grow on it more*. But alas, alas, this is not all ; this is not all that wicked men are thus discovered to men, but that the Lord will find them out, and give them their portion in the Lake of fire. And indeed this is that that ought to be a terror to all the wicked and ungodly ; to consider, that as their hearts are hardened, and their Consciences seared, so the plagues and punishments of God attend upon them. (Lev. 26.) *If thou walk stubbornly against me, and wilt not obey me, I will bring seven times more plagues upon thee according to thy sins.* Let us all then, as we tender the Salvation of our own Souls, take heed unto our paths, that we stand not in the way of sinners, that we sin not with delight and deliberation, it is the very brand of a reprobate, and such alone as God hath forsaken, *Take heed therefore that there be not in any of you an evil heart to depart from the living God.* And thus much for the first point of Doctrine : that there is a way of sinners, in the which the wicked walk, which leadeth unto death.

Doct. 2. The second point of Doctrine that doth now offer it self to our consideration is this, that a godly man doth not settle himself to live as the wicked do, nor frames his life after their lewd example, which is here meant, when the Prophet saith, *He doth not stand in the way of sinners* : yea, it is altogether impossible for a godly man, and one that is truly regenerate, to have in him a full purpose to sin, and to live in sin with deliberation, and to delight in the same. For a purpose to live in any known sin, is a sign of a wicked man, and a

graceless heart ; as when a man is told of his sin, of his ignorance and carelessness of Gods service, praying, hearing, &c. yet still they will be careless and negligent in the same. So when a man is reprov'd for his swearing, yet still will swear ; when a man is reprov'd for prophaning the Sabbath, yet will prophane it ; When a man is reprov'd for his uncleanness, drunkenness, malice, &c. and yet for all that will continue in those sins. Surely this purpose to stand in the way of sinners, is a fearful sign of a wicked man, and is far from a godly man, and one that is truly sanctified, which shall be blessed for evermore. It was a wicked speech of a cursed wretch, (Exod. 3. 12.) *I know not the Lord, neither will I let the children of Israel go.* This was the case of those rebellious Jews, spoken of by *Jeremy*, (Jer. 44. 16.) *We will not hear, nor do, but as we list, and as we have done.* And this was that which made the case of *Herod* so fearful, (Mat. 6. 26.) that notwithstanding he heard *John Baptist* willingly, and did many things at his request, all which were good things in him, yet for all that he would not leave his adultery, but continue in it. Which purpose to sin, of all things is far from a godly man, as *St. John* saith, (1 John 3. 9.) *He that is born of God sinneth not*, that is, with whole consent, but in part ; and man being partly flesh, and partly spirit, as he is Regenerate, sin proceeds not from him, but as he is flesh. As for the wicked, it is not so with them : for it is meat and drink to a wicked man to do the works of the Devil. It is worth even our best consideration, what is said of the Apostle *Paul*, (Act. 9. 1.) that he once *breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the Disciples of the Lord.* But when was this ? Even in the time of his ignorance : but afterwards he preached the same Gospel which before he persecuted, and laboured ever after all the dayes of his life, to build up the Church of God, which before he had laboured to pull down. And this appears in *David*, in *Peter*, in *Mary Magdalen*, &c.

(Luke 7.)

(*Luk. 7.*) who after they had once escaped the snares of the Devil, dedicated ever after, their whole life to the service of God. This Exhortation doth the Apostle give to the *Ephesians*: (*Col. 3. 7. Eph. 5. 8.*) *Ye were once darkness, but now are light in the Lord, walk as children of light.* By these, and the like examples it doth appear, that the godly stand not in the way of sinners; that is, take no liberty to themselves, to live in the custom and practice of any known sin.

Use 1. This may serve in the first place to reprove such kind of sinners, as are so far from leaving their sins, and walking with God in obedience of life, that they are not ashamed to defend their sins. Tell the swearer of his swearing, and blaspheming of the name of God, he will answer, that he hopeth he may swear, so long as he swears nothing but Truth, tell the covetous man of his covetousness, he will answer for it, he must make the best of his own, and he must be a good Husband; So, tell the drunkard of his drunkenness, and fearful abusing of the good Creatures of God, his answer is, it is in kindness and good fellowship; tell the proud man of his pride, and strange attire, his answer is, it is the fashion, and he doth as others do; is not this, *To stand in the way of sinners?* is not this to commit sin with delight, and to say as *Pharaoh, Herod and the Jews*, (*Exod. 19. Mark 6. Jer. 44.*) *We will not repent, we will not leave our sins, but continue in them, let God and man say what they will;* yea, this is but to pay one debt by another, and as the Apostle saith, *Heap up wrath against the day of wrath*, *Rom. 4.*

Use 2. We are all here admonished, as we love our own souls, to take heed of this, that we never sin with an high hand against God, wittingly and willingly: But if we hear sin reprov'd, let us leave it, be it never so pleasant or profitable; let us be like

like that good King *Jehoiada*, 2 *King.* 22. who hearing the book of the Law read unto him, his heart melted within him, and he wept for his sins; for so long as we have in us a purpose to live in sin, it is impossible that we should ever fear God, or truly repent: Let us pray with David, (*Psal.* 19. 12, 13.) *Lord keep thy servant from presumptuous sin!* And let us know, that if we regard, that is to say, love wicked men in our hearts, (*Prov.* 8. 6.) and have a purpose to live in sin, God will not regard our Prayers, nay, all we do is abomination to the Lord: say thou therefore unto laughter; *Thou art mad:* Pronounce the wayes of the wicked to be but vain; say unto thine own Soul, *I will have nothing to do with the wayes of iniquity:* And this will give thee courage when thou shalt come to look Christ Jesus in the face, when thou canst say with the Apostles, (*Mat.* 19. 17.) *Lord I have forsaken all to follow thee:* Oh blessed is the servant, (*Mat.* 24. 46.) whom his Master when he cometh shall find so doing.

Use 3: Last of all we learn here a notable difference between the child of God regenerate, and a wicked man: He that is born of God, and truly Regenerate, he doth not commit sin with full purpose and consent of will, but against his will: so as he can truly say with Paul, (*Rom.* 7. 15.) *The evil that I would not do, that do I:* That is, I am drawn through the corruption of nature, and the temptations of Satan, to do that evil which I hate and condemn. But the wicked man sins with full consent and purpose. I sin, and would not sin, saith the Godly man: I sin, and will sin, saith the wicked man. Yea, what service soever the Regenerate man doth give unto sin, it is like that service that *Israel* gave unto *Pharaoh* in *Egypt*, compelled and wrung out of them by oppression, which made them sigh, and cry unto God to be eased of the same. But the service which he doth give unto the Lord is voluntary and cheerful. Well, to end this.

this point, this is the sum: know this, whosoever thou art, that if thou stand in the way of sinners, that is, takest liberty to thy self to live in any known sin, thou canst have no assurance that thou art yet within the Covenant of Grace; Blessedness is no part of thy portion: He must become a New Creature, that shall enter into New Jerusalem. And thus much for the second part of the description of a Godly man, negatively; *He doth not stand in the way of sinners,*

Nor sit in the seat of the scornful.

BY seat of the scornful, he meaneth here the fellowship and society of the ungodly: So that the meaning of the Prophet David here in this place is, that the godly man, who shall be this blessed man here spoken of, will not converse with those men, nor be familiar with those that make a mock of all Religion, and openly profess all impiety: and the word (*sitting*) doth import such an habit and custom in evil, that a man meaneth not to change his mind; in which words, as in the former, we are to consider these two points: First, that there is a seat of the scornful, in the which the wicked sit: and secondly, that the godly do not sin in it.

A threefold seat. For the first, the Scriptures discover unto us a threefold Chair, or Seat.

First, of Justice, and such an one may that Throne seem to be, (1 Reg. 10. 18.) which Solomon erected.

The second is of Doctrine, as our Saviour Christ saith of the Scribes and Pharisees, *They sit in Moses chair*, Mat. 23. 2.

Thirdly, we read of a Seat or Chair of the scornful, spoken of in this Psalm.

This

This sin of scorning hath its first being from the root of pride, which is the root from whence this sin of scorning doth spring: and indeed it is the fruit of pride, and it is the nature of men, who are tainted with this sin of pride, to suppose that they are better than others, and therefore in regard of themselves, they do contemn and despise another: If they have Wealth, they despise any other that is poorer than themselves. Honour makes them swell in disdain of their poor Brethren, their Wisdom, learning, strength, beauty, friends, eloquence, all these lift men up with pride, and makes them to scorn those that are under them: and this comes to pass, not in respect of Riches themselves, or honour, or beauty, or the like; but in respect of our corrupt Nature, which is so ready to abuse them to our own condemnation. But (O man) why art thou thus puffed up with pride? thou wast but Earth, thou art but flesh, thou shalt be but Worms meat: I pray what great cause hath earth, or flesh, or worms meat to be proud? We were all of us born in sin, we live in misery, and we shall dye in corruption. What cause hath sin or misery, or corruption to be proud, but to be humbled? Besides the manifold infirmities that we are subject unto here, and the innumerable Diseases that are ready to happen unto us in this Life: all teaching us this same Lesson, to be humbled and lowly of mind.

And in this Seat the wicked and ungodly do ease themselves, and take their delight, as sometimes Babylon did, who vaunted so much, that she did sit as Queen, and should see no mourning: as it were in scorn of all that God could do unto her.

And this was the case of the cursed Pharaoh, who seemed to mock God to his face, when he said, *I know not the Lord, neither will I let the Children of Israel go*, *Exod. 9.* So then the Doctrine that we gather hence from the Text is this.

Dott. 3.

Doct. 3. That evil men do not usually make a stay in sin, when at first they have committed it, but they proceed by degrees to be worse and worse, falling from one mischief to another: First, the Devil will suggest evil thoughts unto a man, his evil thoughts do take on consent; consent breedeth action, action bringeth custom, and custom begetteth a necessity in sinning, which is the fore-runner of Death. This appeareth in *Cain*, in *Pharaoh*, and in *Judas*, who by steps and degrees in sinning came at the last to be hardened in sin. As in *Judas*, who was at the first a cunning Dissembler; secondly, a secret Thief; thirdly, a bold Lyar; fourthly a Traytor; and lastly a Reprobate: And thus wicked men, as it is in the Psalm, *They fall from one wickedness to another*: And as we see it clear here in the words of this Text; from walking, to standing, and from standing stock still in sin, at length through custom, come to lye down and wallow in sin: Oh happy then is that man that sinneth least! yea next, he that runneth unto God soonest: but most woful is the estate of him that goeth on in sin, that with *Ahab* hath sold himself to work wickedness in the sight of the Lord. (Psalm 69. 17. Jer. 13. 23.) For mark what followeth, (Heb. 10. 26.) *Can the Black-moor change his skin, or the Leopard his spots: Then may they do good who have accustomed themselves to do evil.* Where the Prophet sheweth, that custom in sinning is almost an incurable Disease. This is a lamentable estate, and that is a fearful judgment of God for a man thus to be left over to himself, to fall thus from one evil to another, and to heap together a great measure against the day of wrath, Psalm eighty one, verse eleven: And the cause of all this in a man, is his disobedience towards his God: for this doth the Prophet make clear, when he saith, *My people would not hear my voice, and Israel would have none of me: So I gave him*

Wicked men proceed by degrees to be exceeding sinful.

up unto hardness of heart, and they have walked in their own counsels? VVhere the Prophet David sheweth, that seeing they would not be reclaimed and reformed, as in mercy towards them the Lord Almighty vouchsafed them the means of Reformation, his Word; therefore the Almighty gave them over unto the hardness of their own hearts, that so they might fill up the measure of their iniquities. 1 Thess. 2. 16. and the just wrath and vengeance of the Almighty might then fall upon them.

Use 1. Hence we are taught, how dangerous a thing it is to give any entertainment unto sin at the first, it will bring a man to the height of sin in the end, even openly to profess it, and to practise it with delight and greediness: custom in sin taketh away all sense of sin, so as by custom men come to judge of sin to be no sin; yea, it makes it very natural to a man, so as such men, who at first would have been ashamed to have been seen amongst lewd Company, yet by custom have gotten such an habit of sin, (*Jer. 5. 15.*) that they have grown to be very impudent and shameless like *Thamar*, who at the first did play the whore with a veil, as being ashamed to be seen, but afterwards grew more impudent: so many a man would have blushed to have been heard swear, to be seen drunk, to be found in unchast company, but through custom have grown so impudent, that they afterwards would blush at nothing, and when a man takes the chair of sin, and sits down in it, and hath got a custom, and taken delight in sin, how hard a thing is it for a man to leave that sin? (*Jer. 13. 35.*) He that hath got an habit, and custom of swearing, as he grows shameless in it, so how hardly doth he leave it? And so of drunkenness, &c. A nail knockt into a post with many blows, is hardly pulled out; and sin, often committed and grown familiar, with a man through custom, is hardly left, Custom is like a strong stream, it carrieth a man into

all

all sin with violence: and as a man by continual labour so hardneth his hand that it becometh senseless; so custom in sin hardneth the heart, that a mans Conscience becometh senceless.

This must teach us to repent betimes, not to suffer sin to come to such an head that it is more likely to master a man, than a man it: for if thou doeest not repent this day, thou wilt find it harder to repent to morrow; thy self groweth weaker, thy iniquity stronger. Custom is a Tyrant *Note.* which will hardly be resisted, therefore it shall be thy wisdom to repent with speed, to delay no longer, but while it is called to day, to break off thy sins, and to turn to God for mercy.

Use 2. We are taught hence, that seeing wicked men do grow worse and worse, adding sin unto sin, and committing all iniquity even with greediness, (1 Pet. 2. 3.) so their damnation doth not sleep, but they draw nearer and nearer their destruction: Yea the judgments of Almighty God follow them at their heels, and in the end will overtake them. Thus it was with the old world; what an heap of sins had they gathered together, adding sin unto sin, as drunkenness unto thirst! But when the measure of their iniquity was full, the Lord God was at hand with his judgments, and they could not escape. This was the case of the sinful *Sodomites*, whose sins cryed up to Heaven for vengeance: (*Gen. 18.*) howsoever they may glut themselves with sin, and drink down iniquity like water, it was but for a season; the Lord would be no longer provoked by their wicked and sinful lives, but sent down fire and brimstone from Heaven upon them. Every sin doth help somewhat to encrease the weight, and to fill up the measure of a wicked mans iniquity. And that God which keepeth a Register of their works, (*Mat. 12. 36.*) will one day give unto every man according unto his works: (*Rev. 20. 12.*) And when they shall go the way

way of all flesh, they shall then say, *What hath pride profited us, and what hath the pomp of Riches brought us to?* When they shall see that all the dayes of their life they have wearied themselves in vain, and then shall be plunged into irrecoverable and intollerable Torments.

Use 3. This may serve to reprove such as relying upon their own Righteousness, Knowledge, Strength, and Godliness, dare converse, and keep company with notorious Atheists, Papists, Mock-Gods, Swearers, Swaggerers, Drunkards, &c. By which means it is just with God, that they not shunning the occasions of sin, are perverted by them to their own destruction. And no less worthy of reproof are those kind of men or women, that link themselves, or their children in Marriage, with such as be vile, wicked, prophane, and irreligious: Alas, what agreement is there between Christ and *Belial*, God and the Devil, Light and Darkness, a Believer, and an Infidel, to have such neer conjunction and fellowship with them? How can such escape and not be polluted with their sin? And because men and women in this match make no better choice, but marry for Love of money, beauty, or the like, rather than for Religion, Vertue, or for the fear of God; it cometh to pass, that they live together most uncomfortably, and in great discontentment.

Nor fit in the seat of Scorners.

BY Scorners in this place, are meant such wicked men as are both hardened in sin, and live a wicked life; such as are become stubborn and rebellious sinners, professing all impiety, contemning God and Man; such as being confirmed with the long practise of sin, and a bad Life, have got a habit of sin, and can do nothing else but sin, and despise all good

good duties, and make a ſcoff at all Religion.

Doct. 2. Hence we learn this Do-

ctrine, that this is the property of a
notorious lewd and wicked man, to
make a mock of all piety and godli-
neſs, to make a mock of all Religion,

*The mark of
a lewd and
wicked man.*

and every Chriſtian duty : and ſuch a man is come
unto a wonderful height of fin, and is notoriously
wicked and ungodly. So it is ſaid, that curſed *Cham*
mocked his Father *Noah*, and *Iſhmael* mocked Godly
Iſaac, becauſe as it is like, *Iſhmael* ſeeing Godly *Iſaac*,
performing ſome holy Duty of Religion, Prayer,
Thankſgiving, or the like, he laughed him to ſcorn :
The *Athenians* mocked *Paul*, (*Act. 17.*) *What will
this babler ſay?* So the Scribes and Pharifees mocked
our Saviour Chriſt, (*Mat. 26. 28*) ſaying : *Hail !
King of the Jews* : The *Jews* mocked *St. Peters* Ser-
mon, ſaying, *Theſe men are full of new Wine* : (*Acts*
2. 12.) The Children of *Babel* mocked *Eliſeus* the
Prophet, ſaying, (*2 Kings 2. 22.*) *Go up thou bald
head.* This was the complaint of Godly *Jeremy*,
(*Jer. 20. 7.*) *O Lord I am in deriſion daily, every one
mocketh me.* And as it was, ſo it is ſtill, and will be ;
the world is full of ſuch lewd and wicked men, ſuch
mock-gods, that mock and mow at all good duties,
ſcoffing and ſcorning all Religion, flouting and miſ-
uſing Gods faithful Miniſters, rail upon them, and
revile them : yea, if any man fear God, make Con-
ſcience of good duties, to hear the Word of God
diligently and carefully, to read, pray in his Family,
&c. and will not ſwear with the ſwearer, drink with
the drunkard, and run with wicked men into all ex-
ceſs of riot : this man ſhall be mocked and pointed
at, and called at by the name of Puritan, and Preciſi-
an, and I know not what, and can very hardly en-
dure their Company. Now theſe kind of men, theſe
ſcoffing *Iſhmaels*, and curſed *Chams*, though they
ſeem to be never ſo honeſt and civil, yet the word
of

of God paints them out in their colours, as the most vile and wicked men that live in the world, because they contemn and despise, they mock and scorn God's word, and those that be most dear unto God.

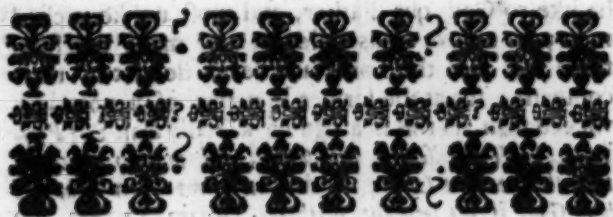
Use 1. Let all such scorers, and scoffing mates take heed, (*Prov.* 3. 32.) for as they be most abominable in the sight of Almighty God, so they seldom or never escape unpunished. Look on that cursed *Cham*, scoffing *Ishmael*; behold God's vengeance upon these two and forty youngsters, that mocked the Prophet *Elizeus*: what became of them that mocked and mis-used the Prophets of the Lord? what became of those that mocked and mis-used our Saviour Christ?

And let Men but observe it, and mark it well, (*Esay*: 37.) and they shall clearly see some Token or other of God's Vengeance, upon the heads of such scoffing wretches: yea, let all such wicked men know that they be too much their own foes, in that they hate the Godly, mock God's Ministers, rail upon his servants; they fare the better for them every day they rise: whatsoever wicked and ungodly men have and enjoy, it is for the godly's sake; for if it were not for them, and their sakes, the Sun would scarce shine upon them, the Heavens would fall upon them, the Earth would open her mouth, and swallow them, the fire would burn them, the water would drown them, and all the Creatures of God would arm themselves against them: And therefore the children of God (as one saith) are like a piece of Cork cast into the Sea, full of Nails, the cork bears them up, which otherwise would sink of themselves one by one. Now then, what a folly and madness is this to hate them, to mock them, and to mis-use them by whom they fare the better every day they rise?

Seeing wicked men are so ill affected to God and his Children, because they love the Devil, and be
his

his Vassals, and these belong to God : Let us herein be like to God our Father, and most unlike wicked men ; let us love Gods children, and make much of those that fear the Lord, and let us delight in their company ; for as the former is a sign of a notorious wicked man, so this is a sign of a Godly man : (*Psal. 15. 4.*) *He despiseth a vile person, and maketh much of those that fear the Lord.* Again, hereby we know that we love God, if we love the brethren. Again, (*1 Joh. 3.*) *All my delight is in the Saints, and such as excel in virtue.* Such as be Religious, fear God, and live a godly life : These be to be beloved, be they never so poor. It is lamentable to see the course of the world, let a lewd man come into company that is notorious wicked, an Atheist, a blasphemous wretch, one that laughs at God and all goodness, a Drunkard, or the like, this man shall be too too welcome, and we will eat and drink, and be merry with him. — But let a godly man, a Prophet of the Lord, a faithful and zealous Minister come into our company, we are weary of him, we cannot endure his Company, he marres all our mirth, we cannot be merry for him. Thus we say, O ungodly and wicked wretches ! thou mayst as well say, thou canst not be merry when God is present. *He that despiseth you, despiseth me.* Such men as these only delight in wickedness ; And thus much for the first part of the description of a godly man, negatively described : *He doth not walk in the counsel of the wicked : He doth not stand in the way of sinners, nor doth he sit in the seat of the scorers.* Which God of his infinite mercy grant that we may not do, nor give the least way to our desires in any evil. Amen.

David's



David's Blessed Man.

The First Psalm.

VERSE 2.

*But his delight is in the Law of the Lord,
and in his Law doth he meditate both Day
and Night.*

*The description
of a godly man
affirmatively.*

Hitherto we have heard a godly man described: First, Negatively, shewing what evils he doth most carefully shun and avoid. Now he cometh to his description affirmatively, shewing what good things he doth most carefully embrace and follow.

In this description first note the Christian duty and holy practise of a Godly and Righteous man: namely to be much, and often in serious and Christian meditation.

Secondly,

Secondly, the object of his ſtudy, not his pleaſures, preferments, or profit, as moſt carnal men do, which mind nothing but earthly things: but he is converſant in the Holy Scriptures, doth ſeriously ſtudy the Word of God; his meditation is concerning the Law, that is, the Heavenly Doctrine, which ſhews the Will of God, and his Worſhip, what man muſt, and ought to believe and do to Eternal Life.

Thirdly, the circumſtance of times is carefully to be conſidered: for the godly man doth not, now and then by ſtarts and fits, like a man in an Ague, read, ſtudy, and meditate the Word and Doctrine of God: but it is his daily ſtudy, and continual exerciſe: not that we ſhould imagine he doth nothing elſe, but the meaning is, he ſetteth ſome time apart dayly to ſerve God, ſome time to read, ſometime to hear, and ſometime to meditate: yea, oftentimes he beſtoweth ſome part of the night, when ſome be at reſt and ſleep, and beſtoweth it on Gods ſervice, ſetting his mind on Heaven, and Heavenly things.

First, in that the ſpirit of Almighty God deſcribeth a Godly man, not only by leaving and avoiding lewd Company and the Council of the VVicked, but alſo by living well, and framing himſelf to ſtudy the Scriptures, and to lead his Life hereafter.

Doct. 1. Hence I gather this Doctrine, that it is not ſufficient for the leading of a godly Life, which may both pleaſe God, and bring comfort to a man's own Soul, not to abſtain from evil, but he muſt alſo do well; not only not to do evil, but to do good: It is not enough to prove a man to be a godly man, and a ſound Chriſtian, that he carefully ſhun and avoid the lewd council and Company of wicked men: but he muſt alſo be as careful to meditate on the Law of God Day and Night. And therefore as in this place, ſo uſually in the Holy Scriptures they are both joyned together, (*Eſay. 1. 16. Pſal. 34.*) *ceafe from evil, learn*

learn to do well : eschew evil, and do good, and thou shalt live for ever. (Mat. 3. 10.) The Axe is put to the root of the Tree, every Tree that bringeth not forth good fruit, &c. Mark, Christ saith, not only every Tree that is barren, and bringeth forth no fruit, good or bad : nor every one that bringeth forth evil fruit ; but, that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewen down, and cast into the fire : (Mat. 25. 4.) and at the last day the Lord will say to the wicked, Depart ye cursed : not for robbing the poor of Meat, Drink, or Apparel, or casting them out of doors, but for want of shewing mercy to them. Now the Net of God's Law and the Gospel catches all sorts of Fishes ; God calls his Servants into his Vineyard at the first time of their age, others at Noon-tide of their Age, and others at the last, or old time of their Age : The Wind of Gods Grace blows where it listeth : God will not stay till man is at leisure to repent, no he will take a wicked man off in the midst of his Delights, in the midst of his Glory, as he did *Belshazzar* and *Herod*, and the rich man in the Gospel ; we read that *Dives* was a wealthy man, and that moreover he fared deliciously every day, and was cloathed with purple and fine Linnen, yet for all this his Damnation did not sleep all this while ; for though he was a Rich man, yet for all that he was not a godly man, but rather a wicked man, for he had no charity in him to poor *Lazarus*, he enjoyed all that the World could afford, yet he was not punished as we can read of, or had any afflictions or crosses ; yet all this doth not make him a godly man, but rather a wicked man : for God's wrath was heaped up for him against the day of wrath, and at the last thrown into Hell, both Body and Soul, *Job* was a godly man, yet he suffered affliction and trouble in this life ; God begins with his own children first, but he ends with the wicked.

A Christians Life doth consist of two parts, so set down by the Apostle *Paul*, Abhor that which is evil, there is one half ; and cleave to that which is good,

good, Rom. 12. 9. there is the other half : If any want the former or the latter, he is but half a Christian, and so shall at last come short of a reward : And therefore this is a property to all the Commandments of God, that where any vice is forbidden, the contrary vertue is commended, and where any vertue is commended, the contrary vice is forbidden. The owner of an Orchard is not contented that his Trees bear not naughty fruit, but if they bear not good fruit he will hew them down as fuel for the fire. It is not enough for *ZACHEUS* that he be no more an Extortioner : but if he will become a true Convert indeed, he must make restitution of all that he hath wrongfully gotten. (*Luke 9. 8. Jam. 2. 25.*) These and the like examples make this Doctrine apparent unto us, that for the leading of a godly life, it is not sufficient that a man do no evil ; *Not to walk in the council of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful, but he must do good ; his delight is in the Law of the Lord, and in his Law doth he meditate both Day and Night.*

But the fashion of this World is only to walk in pride, and live in sin, and though one sin doth not reign in all Ages alike, the fashion of this World doth change even as their wickednesses and sinful courses do, even from bad to stark naught ; the fashion and conformity of this World, and the heart of a wicked man is but counterfeited ; The World is like a Theatre decked and trimmed for a small time, and when the action is done, the hangings and trimmings are taken away, all is bare and unseemly ; such is the condition of this world, and of wicked men, the inventions of wicked men together with the envy of Satan hath altered the fashion of this Age : from true charity to hardness of heart, from pure Religion to dulness of Conscience, from keeping the Sabbath holy and undefiled, to a prophanation and neglect of that great duty : wicked and ungodly men are and have been in all Ages, scoffers and deriders of good men : that hath been their

kind of walking, in *St. Peters*, and *St. Pauls* time, they were full of Malice and Envy, for when they spake of the truth, the Wicked Men cryed out, Behold these men are full of New Wine. In *John the Baptists* time, when he came to preach, and to tell those ungodly men that they must repent, for the Kingdom of God was at hand, though he came neither eating nor drinking, yet they envied him, and said he had a Devil, then when our Saviour came, and Preached unto them the forgiveness of sins, they presently cryed out upon him, and said, He came Eating and Drinking, and that he was a Companion for Publicans and Sinners, and a Glutton, and a Wine-bibber; Such is the envy of this World, and the Malice of wicked men; that let Godly men be never so strict or austere in the course of their life, as *John the Baptist*, nor ever so friendly as our Saviour, but still this crew of wicked and ungodly men will still be censuring them though for no cause. So likewise of *St. Paul*, when he had escaped the shipwrack, and was warming himself by the fire side with the rest of his Company, and they seeing a Viper leap upon his hand, they presently censured him to be a sore Murtherer, or some notorious sinner: thus good and Godly Men are still subject to the Calumny and wicked reproaches of ungodly and sinful men: these men do not walk by the Law of God, but they do sit in the seat of the scornful.

This serves to reprove most men in the World, as no godly men indeed, nor sound Christians: for most men do think, if they can say, I thank God, I do no body any harm, nor say them harm; I am neither Whore nor Thief; I am neither Blasphemer, Drunkard, &c. all is then well, they be as good Christians as the best, and shall as well be saved as the best Preacher of them all. Yea, but you see here, a Godly Man must not only abstain from evil, *But meditate on the Law of God*, not only cease from evil, but do good: Look on the places of Scripture before

before named : *Deborah* pronounceth a heavy curse against *Meroz*, not for hurting or hindring the people of God, but because they did not help them against the enemies of God : And so the Axe and curse of God shall be upon all those that be not as careful to do good, as to eschew evil. *St. Paul* professeth that he was a man of an upright life, and one that was unrebukable to the World, and yet professeth that all this was but as *dung without the Righteousness of Christ*, *Phil. 3. 4.* It were good if our civil honest men (as we call them) would consider this, they stand upon this, they defie all the World, who can say, black is their eye ? They say no Body harm, nor do none : well, grant that they say, (which is impossible) though they could abstain from all outward evil, as swearing, lying, drunkenness, whoring, pride, envy, &c. so as no man could lay any of these to their charge, yet here is but a half Christian, but one part of this life ; for he must not only shun evil, but do good, not only to bring forth evil fruit is damnable, but not to bring forth good fruit ; and in the day of Judgment Christ will proceed against men, not only for doing evil, but especially for not doing good.

Secondly, if such as abstain from gross evils, be in danger of damnation for want of doing good, that is to say, because they have not led a godly life, bestowed much time in hearing and reading the Scriptures, praying and calling on Gods Name, doing works of mercy and equity to men, how much more those that abstain from no evil, but break out into all kinds of wickedness and prophaneness ; such as make a mock of Religion, and seldom or never come to hear the word preached or taught, but abound in all kind of sin and iniquity : If the Rich Man be damned that did not give of his Bread to feed the Poor ! Good Lord ! what shall become of those that have taken away the Bread of the Poor ? that all their Life have drunk down iniquity as it were water ? their

damnation doth not sleep : If these things be done to the green Tree, what shall become of the dry Tree ? In a word, if the not doing of good shall be punish'd to severely as we have heard ; Oh ! what will become of those, whose lives abound in all manner of sin and impiety, whoredom, drunkenness, &c. where shall such sinners as these appear, if the others which have seem'd to have been just and righteous men, shall not be saved ? (Psalm 50. 22.) O consider this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none that can deliver you.

But his delight is in the Law of the Lord.

THAT is, the Godly Man, who is truly blessed and happy, doth wonderfully love, and is greatly affected with the word of Almighty God, and hath exceeding delight and joy in the Doctrine of God, because there is revealed the will of God, whereunto man must be careful to frame and conform all their desires, thoughts, words and deeds ; because herein is chalked out, and declar'd the very high way to Eternal Life and Salvation ; especially, let every Godly man keep the Sabbath undefiled ; for the Lords day is a day that we must rest from all worldly thoughts, and purchase wealth and treasures for our souls, meditating on the Law of God, and thinking on the Death, Passion, and Resurrection of Jesus Christ : this day we must avoid sin, and have no corrupt Communication come out of our mouths ; for ill words beget ill manners, and thrusts all goodness out of doors.

Three ways God makes himself known to a man,

1. By natural reason which is the Law of Nature, which Law is written in the hearts of men,

2. By

2. By his book of the Scripture, for there is his will fully set down, which we must do by reading and meditating on it day and night.

3. God reveals his will by humane instructions, and by an Evangelical way; which is inspired by faith and obedience into the hearts of his Ministers; for by reading of his word, we reveal the pleasure and will of God.

Doct. 2. Hence then we are taught this Doctrine, that it is a special note and property of a godly man, to perform Christian duties to God willingly and cheerfully, and to make them his delight and joy.

Indeed it is worthy, yea, thrice worthy to be delighted in, both in regard of the Author of this Law, which is God; as also in respect of the Authority of it, which is manifold. In regard of God the Author of it, it is to be delighted in, who is the only true and everlasting God, 1 Cor. 8. 6. *Of whom are all things, and we in him.* Secondly, in respect of the Authority of the same, containing in it perfect Wisdom, Truth, Justice, Mercy, Goodness, &c. (Psal. 19. 7.) It is called by the Prophet David, a perfect Law, to the which if a man shall presume to add any thing, God shall add to him the plagues written in this Book; and if any man shall diminish any thing, God will take away his part out of the Book of Life, and from the Holy City. Here, and no where else is to be found the true Urim and Thummim; the Urim, that is Light, and the Thummim, that is Perfection. And the Saints of God in all times and ages have esteemed highly of it.

Thus did Job, *I esteemed thy words more than my appointed food.* Thus did David when he said, Lord, what love have I to all thy Commandments, all the day long is my study in them! And David shews his wonderful love by the terms that he doth give unto it, calling it Doctrine, Testimonies, Commandments, Fear, Judgments, Way, Statutes, Word, &c. And in another

ther place he saith, *That it is more to be desired than gold, yea, than fine gold : That it is sweeter than the honey, and the honey-comb.* And this is it which the Lord himself doth require, when he saith, *Hear O Israel, the Lord thy God is Lord only : And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy Soul, and with all thy might.* And so the Prophet David prayeth, *O Lord I beseech thee accept of the free offerings of my mouth, and teach me thy judgments.* And this is the Rule which the Apostle St. Paul setteth down when he saith : *As every man wisheth in his heart, so let him give ; not grudgingly, or of necessity, for God loveth a chearful giver.* Now that which the Apostle speaketh of Charity and Alms, may truly be understood of every Christian duty ; When we pray, we must pray unto God chearfully ; when we give thanks to God, we must do it chearfully ; and so of all other duties of Gods Worship, laid down in his Word. And indeed this is it which doth put the difference between the godly and the wicked, the service of the one, and the service of the other, *Cain* will come with his Sacrifice as well as *Abel*, but he brought of the worst : (*Gen. 4. 5.*) thinking any thing to be good enough for God, and this he did very grudgingly : whereas *Abel* brought of the best to Sacrifice to God, and this he did willingly and chearfully. And all those duties that are not thus performed, they have no life nor vertue in them, to give them any grace or acceptance with God. So that we see the outward profession is not enough to assure us of our Salvation, if it be not joyned with sincerity of heart.

Now where it is said here, that the
Reason. godly mans delight is in the Law of the Lord, there is great reason why the children of God should be thus affected to his blessed Word, and heavenly Doctrine above all things in the World, that it should be sweeter to them than the honey, and the honey-comb.

First,

First, because it is the bread of life, (*Rom. 1. 16.*) it is the power of God unto Salvation. And therefore it is called (*Mat. 13. 44.*) the Gospel of the Kingdom, and the Kingdom of Heaven, because it is that whereby men are brought to Eternal Life, and the Kingdom of Heaven.

Secondly, it is the effectual means and instrument which the Lord useth, and hath appointed to beget all saving Grace in the hearts of his Children, namely, Knowledge, Faith, Humility, Obedience, and the like.

Thirdly, it is the Bread of Life, even the Heavenly Manna, whereby our Faith is confirmed, and our Souls comforted, yea it is the staff whereto we must lean in all dangers, as David saith; *I had perished in my trouble, had it not been for thy Word, Psalm 119. And thy Rod and thy Staff doth comfort me. Psalm 23.*

Forthly, the Word of God is that direction whereby we may square all our thoughts, words and deeds, as David saith, (*Psalms 19.*) *Thy Word is a Lanthorn unto my feet, and a light unto my paths.* And without this we cannot live well, but shall wander up and down as blind men in the dark.

And last of all, it is the two-edged sword of Gods Spirit, whereby we must put to flight all the temptations of the Devil; so as we cannot repel them, or withstand them, unless we be skilful and cunning to use this weapon. (*Mat. 4. 4.*)

This Doctrine may seem to reprove the greatest part amongst us, as wicked and ungodly; because generally men have no love unto the Word of God, no delight in this Heavenly Doctrine; it is not sweet nor precious in their eyes, but rather it is irksome and tedious unto them, it is bitter and unsavory. It saith with people in these dayes, as it did with those old people of the Jews, *Unto whom should I speak and admonish, that they may hear? Behold their ears are uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken unto it; the word of the*

the Lord is a reproach unto them, and they have no delight therein, Jer. 6. 18. Now that men have no delight to the word of God, which is the very power of God to Salvation. It may appear.

First, because men and women take no delight in hearing, reading, and meditating on the word of God: You shall find a great number that will buy other prophane Books, that will hardly buy the book of all books, the holy and sacred Bible: and if they buy it, yer they spend no time in perusing of it, in reading and meditating on it; Other books are delightful and pleasant to flesh and blood: and this is the reason, they do so much desire them; but withal, this sheweth that they be carnal, not born anew: for if they were, then would they bestow less time in reading and perusing those profane and unprofitable books, and would bestow more time in reading and meditating on this blessed book of God: yea, and the small account men make of Gods Ministers, whom the Lord calls his Ministers, and Embassadors; yea, the Angels of the Church.

Secondly, seeing all the duties that we owe to God, either of hearing, praying, &c. must be performed of us, not upon compulsion, but willingly and chearfully: we learn that every action is accounted of by God, not according to the work it self, but according to the affection of the doer. This the Lord himself doth teach, when he saith, *This people come near me with their mouth, and honour me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me, Isa. 29. 13.* And therefore were their Sacrifices an abomination to the Lord, as he again speaketh in another place, *I cannot away with your New Moons:* and this was it made the poor Widows mite commended above the rest that offered of their superfluity, *Mark 12. 43. He that shall give a cup of cold water to a Disciple in the name of a Disciple, he shall not lose his reward:* alas! what is the bestowing of a mite, a brazen token? or what is a cup of cold water?
are

are they in themselves any thing worth to merit any thing at God's hand? No, no, but God acknowledgeth the manner more than the matter, how they are done, more than what is done.

Which may teach us to labour to have our affections tryed, that whatsoever we do in the service of Almighty God, may be done in truth and sincerity of heart. This was *Jobs* Comfort when he said, *O Lord, I have esteemed thy word more than my ordinary food*: This was the Prophet *David's* comfort, when he could say, *Oh how do I love thy Law! it is my meditation*, *Psal.* 119. 97. And this shall be our comfort, when we shall go the way of all flesh, that we can say with good King *Hezekiah*, *Remember O Lord, that I have walked before thee in truth and with an upright heart*: That we have not been painted Sepulchres, desiring to be accounted righteous before men, but within full of all rottenness and corruption, but have laboured rather to be approved of God.

Oh how ought our Hearts and Souls to be inflamed in a holy and godly zeal towards the word of God, the Law of the Lord here spoken of; yea, we ought more earnestly to long for the water of this Well of Life, than ever *David* did for the Waters of the Well of *Bethlehem*; and when we have tasted how sweet the Lord is, never, oh never so deal with the Lord as the people of *Israel* did, which loathed the *Manna* that which was sent them from Heaven. But much better shall it be for us to cry out with the woman of *Samarita*, *Lord give me to drink of these waters*: for those waters being once tasted of, will keep a man that he thirst not again, (*Joh.* 4. 15.) but shall ever be refreshed by the same to everlasting Life.

Use 3. Lastly, Let us herein labour to manifest our unfeigned love and liking of the Word and Law of God, even by our obedience thereunto, that we desire to frame our lives hereafter, to obey the Doctrine and word of God in heart and life to be reformed by it, and to be conformed to it: Christ maketh this to be

the ear-mark of those that are his Sheep, namely this, *That they hear his voice, and follow him, Job. 10.* And again, *Hereby shall all men know that ye are my Disciples, and love me, if ye keep my Commandments.* So hereby shall men know that we love the Law of God, if we study to keep it, to obey it in heart and life : But if we have in us no care to live thereafter, but break the Law of God continually, and rebel against his Commandements : how can we be said to love the Law of God ? If a Man should say he loveth the Kings Laws, and likes them well, and yet should every day break them wittingly and willingly, and be ever playing the Traytor, would not all men condemn him as an Hypocrite, and though most men do say they love the Word of God, and delight in his Law ; yet seeing they do daily break it, and rebel against it wittingly, and willingly, by swearing, lying, profaning of the Sabbath, drunkenness, swilling, pride, uncleanness, &c. it is manifest they have no love unto it.

Thus much for the first part, shewing that the godly man is well affected to the Heavenly Doctrine of the Word of God, it is the delight and joy of his heart.

Now in the second part of the verse, the Prophet David sheweth the exercise of a godly man, that, as in his heart he liketh and loveth the word and heavenly Doctrine of the Law of God ; so in his life he is conversant in the same, his meditations are much spent therein ; he is said to *meditate therein day and night.* That is, the godly man doth much muse and meditate ; often exercising his mind with calling to mind and remembrance the heavenly Doctrines, comforts, and instructions of the Word of God, and this he doth not slightly and carelessly, but seriously, and with good advice ; and to this end doth evermore set some time apart every day, morning and evening, twice a day at least, for the performance of this godly duty.

Doth meditate day and night.

Here we see still that a godly man, and one that shall be truly blessed the Lord requireth that he be no stranger, and such a one as seldom or never searcheth the Scriptures; but that he be much and often exercised in the holy and serious meditations of Gods Law, in the diligent searching, perusing, and particularly applying of the Heavenly Doctrine of the Word of God: and indeed this is here set down as a true fruit of our love to the word, as the love of the word is made a true fruit of a godly man: for as it is impossible a man should be truly religious and fear God, and yet have no sound love nor delight in the word of God: so it is likewise impossible a man or woman should truly love the Word of God in their heart, that seldom, or never bestow any pains in the serious and earnest meditation of the same. *David* calls God to witness, that the love he bears to the Law of God, was exceeding great, saying, (*Psal.* 119. 97.) *O how do I love thy Law*; and in the same verse he seems to prove the same to God, *It is my meditation continually*; which indeed is a note of true love, to be ever thinking of the thing beloved.

Doct. 3. *The Law of God is a Godly Man's chief delight.*

And in very deed, the careful and diligent study, the often and earnest meditation of the word of God, is the very life and strength of all our worship and service of God: for if men should read much, and never meditate, it would do them no good: If men should hear much, and often, and never meditate, they should be little the better. If men should pray much and often, and never meditate, they should find small comfort. If Men come often to the Sacrament, and do not before and after meditate of the Covenant of Grace, they should not receive much good thereby: So that you see this *Meditation* is all in

all;

all, it puts Life to our Reading, hearing, praying, receiving; and without it all our reading, hearing, praying, and receiving, will stand us in small stead.

For without this meditation, this Law which is the word of God, will either in time be forgotten, whereby we shall become unmindful of it, or else it will prove as a Talent hid in the ground, utterly unfruitful unto us: for this meditation indeed is the third step of a true Convert. The first is to hear the Word of God readily: the second to remember it diligently; and the third to meditate on it seriously, and this is compared to the *chewing of the Cud*, Deut. 14. 6, 7. which is never found in the unclean, but in the clean beasts.

True it is, that hearing and reading the Word, will beget knowledge, but meditation is the especial means to work upon the affection; for else all our knowledge shall only be in general idle, and swimming in the brain, which may well be called brain-knowledge, but no heart knowledge: but by serious Meditation we do apply that which we hear to our own selves in particular; laying the Doctrine to our own hearts, applying it to our selves, to comfort our sad souls, to humble them for our sins, and to square our lives thereby, that we may in all things keep a clear conscience before God and man. The Lord gives *Jahwah* a straight charge to do thus: *Let not the book of the Law depart out of thy mouth, but meditate therein day and night: That thou mayest observe and do according to all that is written therein, for then shalt thou make thy way prosperous, and thou shalt then have good success, Josh. 1. 8. and Deut. 6. v. 7, 8.* And thus the servants of God have been much exercised in meditation, and thereby have grown wonderful, not only in knowledge, but in practise, as we may see in *David*, *Psal. 119.* who took great delight in God's Law, and made it his meditation continually. And of *Ijaac* it is reported, that he went out into the fields in the evening to meditate, *Gen. 24.*

Use 1. This reproves the common fault in the world, that most men utterly neglect this duty seldom or never settle themselves to meditate in the Law of God, and his heavenly Doctrine.

It is hard to find a man or woman that makes any conscience of this duty, to set themselves apart, and set themselves in Gods presence: to call to mind, what they have heard and learned, to apply it to themselves in particular, to humble them, or to comfort them: and that is the cause why most men, hearing and reading so much as they have, yet profit so little in knowledge, faith, repentance and obedience. They can be content to hear the word preached and taught, and it may be, now and then to read a Chapter, but to think upon it, to ruminate upon the word of God, and as it were to chew the Cud, to call the same to mind again, to apply it to themselves, to labour to profit by it: this they cannot endure, this they care not for. For if men did carefully meditate of the things they heard and read, how could they be so ignorant in Gods Word as most be? so void of Knowledge, Faith, Repentance, Humility, Zeal, Patience, and the like gifts and graces, which accompany godly and holy meditation? For Books of Statutes, men will not only have them in their houses, but at their fingers end; but bible they have none, and if they have, it lyeth upon the desk or table, and they read it not, and if sometimes they read it, yet they never meditate thereon.

Use 2. This may admonish all men, as they love their own souls, to make more care and conscience of the performance of this duty, to call to mind what we do hear or read, to think and muse upon it, to chew the cud, to lay it to heart; yea, and to apply it to our own souls and consciences in particular: This is like the rumination or chewing of the cud, (*Deut.* 14. 6, 7.) which was to be found only in the clean beasts,

beasts, whereas they which chewed not the Cud were unclean : This is the mark and property of a godly and blessed man, whereas the not doing it, is the mark of a wicked and ungodly man. Let us then remember that we make the Word of God our Meditation continually. Many men meditate much, some in one thing, and some in another, as they are led by fond affection : some thinking of honours, some of pleasures, some of riches, some of one thing, and some of another ; and of these they doat and dream, talk and speak continually. But here we are taught another lesson, namely, that our minds must especially be set upon the word of God ; that must be our delight, and the joy of our heart.

The last point of this verse, is the circumstance of time, namely not by fits : But the Godly man keeps a continual course in the study and meditation of the Word of God, so as he setteth apart some time for the Worship and service of God, at least twice a day to meditate and study in God's Book.

Doct. 4. Hence we learn that every one that will live a godly life, and so please God,

A Godly man that he may find comfort to his own
sets some time soul, and be blessed in the end, must
apart every day set some time apart every day for the
for God's ser- worship and service of God, to read,
vice. pray and meditate, and at the least

twice a day to call upon his name, to read the Word of God, and to study therein. This is that the Lord commandeth his people to offer unto him every day, *the morning and evening Sacrifice* : at the least twice every day they were commanded to worship God, and so the holy Patriarchs were wont to worship God morning and evening. So we read in *Gen. 24. 63.* that godly *Isaac* went out into the fields in the evening to pray or meditate, to make himself fit to pray. And *Job* rose up early to offer sacrifice, and called his family together : (*Job 1. 5. Acts 10. 2.*) and this

this did *Job* every day : and *David* in many *Psalms* shewed that he did set some time apart every day to worship God in praying, reading, meditating, &c. *Cornelius worshipped God continually*, that is, every day, according to the Rule of the Apostle; *Pray continually* : (1 *Thess.* 5. 17.) and that we should not be weary of well-doing. Christ spake a parable of the unjust Judge, and a poor Widow, to this end, that we ought alwayes to pray, &c. and not to wax faint and weary, (*Luke* 18. 1.) The meaning is, not that men should leave their callings and other business altogether, to attend upon hearing, reading, meditating, &c. but that we should be much and often in meditating, in prayer, in reading, &c. and in performing these blessed duties unto Almighty God : and at the least three times a day, to pray and call upon the name of God : in the morning when we do rise, to give unto God hearty thanks, for keeping us the night past, and to crave for a blessing at his hands over us the day following : At noon again, even when we receive his good Creatures : and at night when we go to rest : And this godly practise the word of God prescribes us, and the examples of the Godly doth teach us : *Daniel* prayed three times a day upon his knees to God, and praised him, as his manner was, though the King had made a strict Law against it : *Evening, Morning, and at Noon-day will I pray unto thee*, *Psal.* 55. 17. And again, *Seven times a day will I praise thee*, *Psal.* 119. 64. (*Gen.* 22. 2. *Job.* 15.) That is many times. For the morning, *Early in the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee*. And thus did *Abraham*, *Isaac*, *Job*. Secondly, At Noon, or Mid-day, so did *Peter*, *Peter went out to prayer about the sixth hour*, *Acts* 10. 9. That is, about Twelve of the Clock, or Noon-tide, Thirdly, at night in the evening when we go to bed to take our rest, (*Gen.* 24. *Psal.* 139. 11. *Psal.* 16. 5. *Mat.* 13. 23. *Esa.* 28. 3, 4.) we must then remember likewise to render the Lord thanks for the comforts of the day, and to crave his blessing for that night.

night, neither is this all; but in the night-time, when sleep is departed from a man, and nature is sufficed with rest, he doth even then call to mind the heavenly Doctrine of the word of God, and doth muse and meditate therein, as the Text saith here, *even day and night*. For God which hath bounded the day with the night, hath set no bounds to a godly man's meditations. It is nothing to be, first, *one that beareth the word*: Secondly, *one that receives it*: Thirdly, *with joy*: if Fourthly, it shall be *for a time only*, if he shall not also continue, and constantly persevere to meditate therein day and night.

So as we see this is our duty, to set some time apart every day to worship God, as to hear, read, pray, meditate, &c. We see men do set apart, depute, and ordain some certain time every day for the food of the body, or at the least twice a day to eat and drink; how much more then should we be careful for our souls every day, to read, meditate, and to pray? Of all the time we spend in this world, none will be more comfortable to us in death, when we shall go the way of all flesh, than that which we have bestowed in the service and worship of Almighty God.

There is not now one hour spent in the service of God, but will then minister cause of joy and rejoicing: neither is there now one hour spent in the service of sin and Satan, but the remembrance thereof will then be a terrour unto the Soul: *Oh! that men would be wise, then would they understand this: they would consider their latter end, Deut. 32. 29.*

Use 1. This seems to reprove the Common carelessness of the World; most Men and Women spend all their days in delights and vanities, in sports and pastimes, in scraping and raking together the things of this life, and in the mean time find no time at all to serve God; that in twenty four hours, hardly can spare one to serve God, one to read, hear, pray, meditate; yea, how many be there that never open their

their Books to read. one Chapter in the Bible all the week long? How many be there that never spend one quarter of an hour in meditation, which never call upon God from Sunday to Sunday? doth not this prove men to be carnal and ungodly? Do not these men do nothing of conscience, or with delight and love to God and his Worship, but all for fashion sake, or for fear of the Law? What difference is there betwixt those men, who seldom or never call upon the name of God, and the beast they ride on? The beast rises in the morning out of his Den, and stroakes himself, goes his to meat, and so to work; even so do they, never call on the Name of God. In this thing wherein do so much men differ from a very beast? How can such look for any blessing from God upon their labours? Yea, how can they chuse but fear some fearful judgment and curse of God to overtake them? And no doubt the cause why many ride and run early and late, (do not call upon God for a blessing upon their endeavours) cannot prosper and thrive in the World: No, God sends sometimes judgments, plagues, and punishments, upon them, and all for the neglect of this Godly and Christian duty, (*Ps. 14.*) it is just with God both to cross and to curse both them and their labours.

Note. Again, by the Rule of this Doctrine they are no less to be reprov'd, which can be content now and then to hear, read, pray, and meditate, &c. but this must be at their leisure, when they have nothing else to do. But to keep certain times, Mornings, Noons, Evenings, to leave all sports, pastimes, delights, and business to go to God and serve him, and call upon his name; they cannot abide that, they will not be sorried and restrained. But, as the man in the Gospel, when Christ called him, first he must go bury his Father: and as he that would go *bid his friends farewell.* So many could be content to serve God, and to pray unto him, but they must keep their friends

friends company : or as those that were bidden to the feast ; one hath his Oxen and gain to hinder him ; another his Wife, his Pleasures and Delights, which he is married unto, and so can find no time to serve God ; even the least thing in the World is matter sufficient to hinder them from serving of God : these men shew that they find no comfort at all in the service of Almighty God, no good, no fruit, no benefit : for if they did, they would not be such strangers unto it.

Use. 2. Let every one be exhorted and stirred unto this duty ; if we have not begun, now to begin and end in the fear of the Lord : to imitate God's Children, as *David*, and the rest : Let us set some time apart every day for the word and Prayer, else we shall never prove our selves good Christians, else we should never find true comfort, else we can never look for God's blessing upon us : let us then set apart some of our idle times that we bestow in Talking, in Walking, in Playing, in vain delights, or else idly ; and bestow it on God's service and worship, in Hearing, Reading, Praying, Meditating, &c. *David* early in the morning presented the Day-light, yea, at mid-night would be so busied. The Eunuch in his Journey was reading the Scriptures. Let us then never arise in the morning or go to bed, but as duly let us ever be mindful of this duty. Let us not mispend our precious time : Let us (I pray you) consider why we live here in the World, not to spend and consume our time in toys and vanities, but serve God and to seek for comfort and Salvation unto our souls : let us therefore so spend it, as we may have comfort in the end.

Use 3. Last of all, we are exhorted to be very careful, after we have begun a good course in godliness, to persevere, and to continue in the same day and night, even unto the end ; not only in the day time of prosperity,

prosperity, but in the night-time of adversity, for unto God *the day and night are both alike*: (Psal. 139. 12.) many make a fair beginning, but the end is very fearful and dangerous: many lay their hands to the Lord's Plough, (Luk. 9. 62.) but in the end they look back. *Lot's Wife* seems as forward as her Husband, she goes out of *Sodom* as well as he; she takes her journey with her Husband, but she did not continue and hold out unto the end; but looks back contrary unto the Commandment of God, and so was turned into a Pillar of Salt: and she being made a spectacle to all back-sliders, (Luk. 17. 32.) our Saviour puts us in mind of her, when he saith, *Remember Lot's Wife*. And *Paul*, (Acts. 26. 21.) when he had preached the Resurrection of Christ, *Agrippa* said unto him, *Thou perswadedst me almost to be a Christian*: but there he staid and rested, and would proceed no further. These are fearful Examples, it had been better for such *That they had never known the way of Righteousness*: (1 Pet. 2. 12.) for indeed in a Christian race there is no standing at one stay: for not to go forward in Religion, is to go backward.

And thus much for the description of a godly man affirmatively, shewing what he doth carefully embrace and follow. *But his delight is in the Law of the Lord, &c.* So grant us, good God, the knowledge of thy Law, that we may dayly practise it in our lives and conversations, to the honour of thy Name, and the future benefit of our souls at the general day of our Resurrection: to whom with the Father and the blessed Trinity, be ascribed all possible thanks from us poor Creatures, from this time forth, and for evermore, *Amen*.

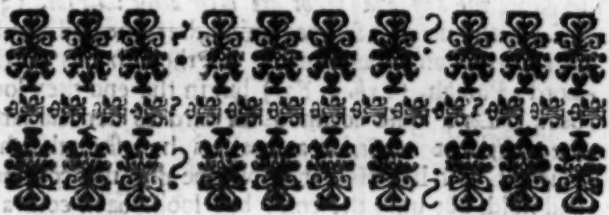
friends company : or as those that were bidden to the feast ; one hath his Oxen and gain to hinder him ; another his Wife, his Pleasures and Delights, which he is married unto, and so can find no time to serve God ; even the least thing in the World is matter sufficient to hinder them from serving of God : these men shew that they find no comfort at all in the service of Almighty God, no good, no fruit, no benefit : for if they did, they would not be such strangers unto it.

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David's Blessed Man.

The First Psalm:

VERSE 3.

He shall be like a Tree planted by the Rivers of waters, that will bring forth her fruit in due season, whose leaf shall not fade; so whatsoever he shall do, shall prosper.

Hitherto the Prophet David hath described to us a godly and righteous man: such a man is truly blessed, both negatively: shewing what be the evils he must very carefully shun and avoid, as also affirmatively, by those vertues and holy duties which

Wherein the godly man is blessed.

which he doth carefully embrace and follow.

Now in this verse the Prophet proceeds to set out the happiness of a godly man, or wherein his happiness doth consist. And this he doth first by a similitude, comparing him unto a pleasant, fruitful, and flourishing Tree: Secondly, by that blessed success God gives unto a godly man; in the end of this verse,

The precedent part of the verse, the Similitude it self, it hath in it these parts.

First, Whereunto a godly man is compared, to a Tree.

Secondly, The nature of this Tree is described, not every common or trivial tree, but such a tree, which is for the original of it, *planted*; secondly for the situation of it, *by the Rivers of waters*: Thirdly, for the propriety of it, *that will bring forth her fruit in due season*; Fourthly, by a contrary property, *whose leaf shall not fade*.

First, then, observe by this similitude, that man is compared to a Tree, and in three things especially, the shape, the growth, and the state of a Tree.

Man may well be compared to a Tree in respect of his shape. For as a Tree consists of the Root, the Stock, and the Boughs, or Branches; even so doth man,

Man like to a Tree. 1. In shape.

this mystical tree. He hath his head, which is the root, and hair as small roots; his body as the stock; and his arms and legs as so many boughs, and fingers and toes as lesser twigs: Only the difference between the Natural Tree, and man this Mystical Tree, is this: the Natural Tree is rooted in the earth, receiving as *Esaus* blessing, (*Gen. 27. 28.*) the fatness of the same; but Man this heavenly Plant, derives not his juice and nourishment from the fatness of the Earth, but from Heaven above, according to God's wise disposing of his Root, which is above, not below; and therefore we are exhorted by the Apostle to set our affections on Heavenly things, and

and not on things here below ; for we through Christ are made partakers of the Divine Nature ; in Heaven therefore must our conversation be. (2 Pet. 4.)

Secondly, Man may be said to be
 2. *In growth.* like a tree in respect of his growth, for a tree at first is flexible by nature, and so by degrees a little and a little grows to be stronger and stronger till it comes to perfection, and then again begins to wither and dry up; so saith it with man this mystical Tree, while he is in the state of infancy, he is a tender twig, and his mind is as flexible as a twig, easily inclined to vertue, if he be accordingly educated ; or else to vice, if the same be neglected : an excellent caveat to all Parents and Governours of youth, that they take a due time of correcting and educating of these tender plants ; namely, to bend the Tree while it is a twig ; for if it be suffered, it will grow to be cureless : And as a man is like to a Tree in respect of his infancy and tender age, so in respect of his decrepit old age ; for when the Tree is once come to his perfection in growth, it then decayes and declines ; so saith it with man, let him seem to be as tall, and as straight as a Cedar Tree, he must become a shrub again, and stoop to age. For man's Life is well compared to a day, (Ec. 3. 1.) whose evening will most certainly follow his morning, until the night of Death cause him to sleep in the Grave : For as there is a time to be born, so there is a time to dye. Be it that thou now seemest to be as strong as an Oak, and as tall as the Cedar, as flourishing as the Bay-tree, yet at last rottenness will creep into the strongest Oak, and strength and tallness will be abated on thee, (Ec. 12. 3.) when the keepers of the house shall tremble, &c.

Thirdly, Man may be compared to
 3. *In State,* a Tree in respect of the state of a Tree, and that divers ways.

First, as the tallest Cedar is in greatest danger of wind and weather : Even so the man that is tall, either

ther in place of Authority, Riches, Honour, or the like, is most subject to the assaults of Satan, and rage of the wicked : and men of such excellent places in Church or Common-wealth, are more subject to changes, disfavour, to envy, insurrections, poysonings, murtherings, as to so many raging winds : Whereas those that with little *David, tend the Ewes great with young*, are free from those assaults.

Secondly, It is commonly seen, the more evil the Tree is, the less fruitful : So fareth it with man naturally, unless men be seasoned with grace, riches, honour, dignity, or the like, are great occasions of a high mind, and an high mind is like unto a mountain, which the higher it is, the more barren it is. Whereas, if he be mean and simple of Spirit, he may fitly be compared to the valleys *which are ever fruitful*, and as the Psalmist saith, *stand thick of corn* : For humility is the ground-work of Christian vertues, and pride the root of all evil, and the Queen of all vice.

Thirdly and lastly, the end of every tree is to become either timber for building, or fuel for burning : so fareth it with man, this mystical Tree ; when death cometh, which is God's Axe, by the which he doth cut us down, he becometh either timber for the Lord's house, *When this earthly Tabernacle shall be destroyed, to be a building not made with hands, but eternal in the heavens* : or else (alas) but fuel for the fire of God's wrath, even in *Tophet*, where is fire and much wood, and where the Lord's wrath, as the bellows shall never cease blowing and kindling the same.

It is here first of all to be noted, that the spirit of God sets out the happiness of a godly man, by comparing him to a goodly green Tree. Hence we learn, first of all, that it is not only a lawful, but a commendable and profitable kind of teaching for God's Ministers to illustrate points of Doctrine by similitudes and comparisons, so that they may be familiar, and fit to make people to conceive what they teach, and

and to raise comparisons from the plow and plow-share, to that end, that even the simplest in a Congregation may understand what is said, and what is taught. This was the course of the Prophets from time to time in their Sermons to the people, (*Job. 15. Mat. 3. Job. 10. 1. Mat. 3. 10. Luk. 8. 4.*) This was the course of our Saviour himself, who in all his Sermons used both Parables and Similitudes, comparing good Men to good Trees, and bad Men to bad Trees, comparing himself to a Vine, his Father to an Husbandman, us to Branches; himself to a Shepherd, us to Sheep, and the Word to twenty things: as seed, Mustard seed, &c. to teach all those that are God's Ministers, that when they preach unto their people, that they lay not up their speech in a mist of words, but so to deliver it, that the meanest and shallowest among the hearers may understand it. Thence came the profession of Paul, *We preach not our selves, but Christ Jesus our Lord, 2 Cor. 4. 5.* And hence came that worthy resolution of his, *I had rather in the Church speak five words, &c. that I might instruct others, than ten thousand words in a strange tongue, 1 Cor. 14. 19.*

In which words, by strange Tongue, we are not simply to understand *Hebrew, Greek, Latine, &c.* but by speaking of the Mother-tongue in a strange manner. Preachers are fitly compared to a Nurse; a Nurse doth half chew the meat to the little one, and doth babble unto them in their own stammering Tongue, so must Preachers proportion their Doctrine to their hearers capacity, and fit his Tongue to their understanding.

This may serve to reprove such kind of Preachers, who seek not to preach Christ crucified, but preach themselves, even such as in handling the Word of God, and preaching the Gospel, seek to shew their own learning, wit, art, and memory, and so indeed preach no Christ, but themselves like the old Pharisees, *loving the praise of men more than the praise of God.* But what shall David the Prophet of the Lord, or rather

rather the Spirit of God in him, stoop so low. as to speak to the understanding of all men, by similitudes, comparisons, and the like? and shall sinful man, a worm of the Earth, exalt himself above God, to seek only to tickle itching ears with the words of man's Wisdom?

Use 2. Seeing God's Ministers must be faithful Teachers of the truth of God, and must deliver the same in the plain evidence of the Spirit, not with the enticing words of mens wisdom, this serves to direct the Hearers in the art of hearing: They must submit themselves to God's Ordinance, and be ready to know the will of God; we must not have itching ears, that are not able to suffer wholsom Doctrine like the Gentiles, who despised the preaching of the Apostles because it was not stiled with man's painted eloquence, esteeming it foolishness: (*Cor. 1. 2.*) What but to stint the Spirit, and to teach the Lord to speak? prescribing the Minister what he shall say, and restraining our hearing what we shall hear? what then will follow, but that we shall hear without fruit, and the Word to be unto us only a savour of death unto death.

Dott: 2. Hence we may observe here a second point of Doctrine, that seeing the Prophet, compareth a godly man to a Tree, that of all the Creatures of God, there is a double use, one Natural, the other Spiritual. As a Tree in Nature, signifies such plants of the Earth as brings forth fruit according to their kind. Now besides this natural signification, it serves to put us in mind that we ought to be, (*Mas. 3. 10.*) namely, fruitful trees in the Lord's Orchard, lest if we be barren or bad, we prove fuel for the fire. A man having a Tree in his Orchard, if it brings forth nothing but leaves, he will cut it. and prune, and dung it;

*Double use of
all the Creatures
of God.*

but if after all this cost and labour it remain still barren, he will then hew it down, as good for nothing but fuel for the fire. Hereby we may see how God will deal with us: we be all Trees here planted in the Lord's Orchard, (*Ejay* 5.) he doth water us with the preaching of his Word, (*Luk.* 8. 4, 5,) he cuts us, and prunes us. Now if after much cost and labour we shall remain barren still, if the Lord come three or four years, and still no fruit will be found, he will then bethink him to stub us up, that we cumber not the ground. So by sowing of Corn into the ground, to maintain man's Life, our Saviour leads us to consider of another thing: for as the sower casts his seed abroad into sundry sorts of ground, and they according to their Nature bring forth fruit accordingly, even so the Minister of the Word scatters and sows the seed of God's Word into the ground of men's hearts, and as they be prepared, so they bring forth fruit: So by a Weavers shuttle we see the shortness of a mans Life gone in a moment.

Verse 4. of the Chaff and Dust of the Earth
this Psalm. about, giving it no rest, until it be clean dispersed away? Oh consider

then how the curse of God shall follow and torment the wicked, and never let their Souls be at rest, till it consume them. Dost thou lye down in thy bed every night? oh remember that thou must shortly lye down in thy Grave, be covered with dust, and therefore prepare to dye in the Lord. Dost thou see the beautiful Grasse and Herbs of the Earth cut down and wither away? (*Ejay.* 40. 6, 7.) so thy beauty and riches shall fade and perish. When thou seest stinking Carrion, there behold the picture of thine own self; for no Carrion is so loathsome to a man, as a rebellious sinner to God. Dost thou put on thy cloaths to cover thy nakedness? Oh labour for the precious Robes of Christ's Righteousness, *That thy filthy nakedness do not appear.* (*Rev.* 4. 18.) Dost thou but wash

wash thy hands in water? Oh labour for the blood of Jesus Christ to wash away the spots of thy sins. Dost thou but sit down to eat and to drink, to nourish thy body, without which it could not live? Oh consider, that thy Soul doth much more stand in need of the bread of Life, the food of thy Soul. Dost thou see sometimes Brimstone burning? Oh consider, and quake for fear of the dreadful Judgment of God upon *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, that were burned with fire and brimstone, and how all sinners shall have their portion in the *Lake of fire and brimstone*. Dost thou but take a book into thy hands, and open it leaf by leaf? Oh consider, that the time will come, when the *Book of thy Conscience* shall be opened, (*Rev. 20.*) wherein all thy sins are written one by one, and thou shalt then receive according to thy works. And thus we see that of all the Creatures of God, there is a double use to be made of them: the one Natural, the other Spiritual; one Temporal, the other Eternal.

He shall be like a Tree planted by the Rivers of waters.

THis part of the Similitude doth signifie unto us our implanting and ingrafting into Jesus Christ his mystical body, by the work of God's Spirit, and by the means of a true and lively faith.

This Word *Planted* is a Metaphorical speech, and borrowed from the practise of Husbandmen, who first take up their plants out of the nursery or place where they first sprung up, and then plant them in the Orchard or Vineyard: so fareth it with man, this heavenly plant. And the comparison holds good in divers things.

First, For the Circumstance of time, when the Plants of the Earth are thus removed, and that not usually in Summer, when the heat of the year is up,

and the sap is gone up into the Plant, but in the winter-time; this is usually to be seen for the most part. Even so the time in which the godly man is planted, it is the Winter-time; that is, the time of sorrow and sore affliction; not in the Summer of peace, when all things outwardly may seem to go well with a man, and he saith, peace, peace; but when God doth give unto a man the sight of his sin, and lets him see the reward of sin, even Eternal Death. Oh when a mans sins do thus muster themselves before him, and against him: Oh this winter-time, this time of affliction and sorrow, now is the season of the removing of this heavenly Plant, *Man*. (*Rom. 6.*)

Secondly, As a Plant is removed, not when it is fruitful, but removed, to the end it may be fruitful: So saith it with Man, this mystical Tree: we are not fruitful by Nature, before such time as we are planted and ingrafted into Jesus Christ, for till then we bring forth nothing but bitter and unsavoury fruit: but we are planted to the end we may be fruitful, and being once in Christ, we shall then, as living plants of that lively stock, bring forth fruit incontinently. In particular, this planting hath in it two things.

1. *Plucking up.*

2. *Setting down.*

The plucking up shadows out unto us three things in the conversion of a sinner.

First, Our separation from the world: he cannot be in Christ, that hath his rooting still in the Earth, amongst the men of the World: and therefore, as we have heard before, we must be careful, that we walk not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stand in the way of sinners, nor sit in the seat of the scornful: They are as so many noysom shrubs, that will be ready to fret the tender plants of the Lord, and to annoy them, and therefore we must be removed from amongst them, that is, must have no secret society with them.

Secondly,

Secondly, It signifies our deliverance from the power of Original sin, thus: For as a plant once removed, receives no more juyce nor nourishment from the old Earth, from which it is removed, but from that soyl into which it is planted: So fareth it with this heavenly Plant, being regenerate, and ingrafted in Jesus Christ, there will follow such a change of will, affection, understanding, and the like faculties of the soul and body, that whereas before they were altogether earthly, carnal and vain; so now they mind heavenly things, being sanctified by the Spirit of Grace; (*Rom. 6.*) the power of Nature, that is, that sap of sin being put away.

Thirdly, It signifies a Christian man's sorrow for sin; for as no Plant can be removed from one place to another but the Ax, and other instruments of the Husbandman must be laid unto it, and many a root must be cut off beefore it can be removed: So fareth it with man this heavenly Plant: the Lord's Husbandmen, which are his Ministers, they must bring the Ax of God's Word, and lay the same to the root of our Conscience, and we must have many an unprofitable sprout of Nature cut off, before we can be taken out of Nature, and ingrafted into Jesus Christ the root: that is, thy affections; that have taken such deep rootings into thy profits, into thy pleasures, and the like, all these must be cut off, before thou canst be planted into Christ.

Doct. 3. Hence mark, in that the Prophet David compares a godly man thus to a Tree, not wild, but planted, and that by the Rivers of water, and that this is a sign of our incision, or ingrafting into Christ his mystical body, whereby we are made Members of the same: Hence I say, we are taught, that all men out of Christ are miserable, only they be blessed that be united unto Jesus Christ, and ingrafted into

All men that are not ingrafted into Jesus Christ are miserable.

his mystical Body. Our Saviour speaketh to this, when he compares his Father to an Husbandman, himself to a Vine, and all of us to branches; Now he shews that those men that be not ingrafted into him, (*Joh. 15. 1.*) that they be but dead and withered boughs, and therefore they must be burned in the fire. (*Rom. 11.*) We are all by Nature wild Olives, that bring forth nothing but sower and unsavory fruit till we be transplanted by the Spirit of God, and ingrafted into the sweet Olive Jesus Christ. We see this plain by common experience, take a sciene from a Tree, and unless it be ingrafted into another stock, it will dye, and never bear fruit: So unless we be grafted into Jesus Christ by Faith, and the Spirit of God, we must needs wither and come to nothing, but prove fuel for the fire of God's vengeance. And *P. u.* shewing the estate of all men by nature, out of Christ, saith, *that we are all dead in trespasses and sins; Eph. (2. 1, 2, 3.) The children of wrath, (Joh. 3. 6.)* yea, the very Vassals of the Devil and limbs of Satan, heirs of God's vengeance and eternal damnation, (*Joh. 8. 35.) we are without God in the World, strangers from the Common-wealth of Israel, (Rom. 3. 13.)* in a cursed and damnable estate, *Unless a man be born anew, he can never enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. (Eph. 4. 18.)* Yea, the Devil is called the God of the world, because Men by nature are his vassals and slaves; he reigns and rules in them. We are in the Devils Claws, and taken in his Snares to do his will. This is the common slavery of all, high, low, rich, poor, noble, and simple. Let men boast never so much in outward respects, as sometimes the Jews did, *we were never bound to any*; yet until the Son of righteousness, Christ Jesus do make them free, this is their captivity. We read what a great and intolerable bondage the people of Israel were in, in *Agypt* under *Pharaoh*: but it can no way figure out unto us the miserable slavery and bondage that every man is under the spiritual *Pharaoh*, Satan; for here the Soul,

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the will, affections, and ail are captivated, and held in snares to do his will.

Use 1. The use hereof may serve to humble us, and to cause the lofty to strike sail, which joy so much in outward things, riches, honour, beauty, strength, authority, &c. Alas ! what of all these, when in the mean time thou thy self art but a slave unto sin and Satan, a dead and withered Tree, reserved for the fire of God's wrath ? eternal death is thy surest inheritance. If thou hast thy right, what earnest thou expect but the fire of Hell ? It is Nature's desert, and that which Nature doth aim at : Why art thou then (O man) so secure when thy sins have cast thee into such a dismal estate ? Oh ! Let us labour to come out of it, let us not suffer our eyes to sleep, nor our eyelids to slumber, till we have got the assurance that we are taken out of the state of Nature into the state of Grace, and to be by faith ingrafted into this true stock Christ Jesus.

Use 2. Secondly, This shews that all those that live and dye in the state of Nature unregenerate, not born anew, not ingrafted into Jesus Christ, must needs perish, and be damned for ever, (*Joh. 3. 3. 5. Eph. 2. 1, 2, 3.*) The Apostle shews that all men by nature be stark dead in trespasses and sins, and that all by Nature are the children of wrath, as well as others, high, low, rich, and poor, old and young, learned, and unlearned : This is that our Saviour saith, *unless ye repent, ye shall all perish.* (*Luk. 13. 8.*) And again, *If any man abide not in me, he is cast off as a withered branch : and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they burn :* Oh ! how should this admonish all men to look about them : it is wonderful to see how men go from day to day securely in their sins, and neither think of Heaven nor Hell, but persevere and continue in their ignorance, unbelief, and hardness of heart ; in swearing, contempt of the Word, prophaning the

Sabbath in lying, stealing, adultery, &c. *O consider this ye that forger God!* Oh consider the woful and fearful estate of all such as live and dye out of Christ in the state of Nature, they must needs perish, and for ever be damned: O think of this, and the Lord give thee understanding in all things. That every day thou risest, thou art in danger to lose thy own soul; and therefore lay this Doctrine to heart, and know that it is not good to dally in such points, God will not be mocked: And therefore now begin to repent, and turn unto God while it is called to day: Defer no longer, but repent, and seek to be reconciled to God while it is called to day.

Now the second part of this Doctrine is, that as all those that be out of Christ, are miserable and cursed, and if they live and dye in the estate of Nature, cannot be saved: So on the other side, all those that are regenerate and born anew, that be ingrafted into Jesus Christ by Faith, and the Spirit of God, so as they be the true and lively members of Christ his mystical body, they are blessed and happy. Now that these are blessed, it may appear in that blessed prayer Christ made a little before his passion; He begs this at his Fathers hand, *That all the Elect might be one in him, and he in them.* And this he begs oft and earnest unto his Father for: which shews that it is a matter of endless moment and great importance. Now that such as be one with Christ, are truly blessed, let us consider a little what great and incomparable benefits we receive by this our planting and ingrafting into Christ his mystical body.

Comforts arising of our ingrafting into Christ.

First, Hereby it comes to pass that every true Believer hath sweet union and communion with God the Father, Son- and Holy Ghost: so as God the Father loves him as his Child, takes care of him, doth bless him, and provides a Kingdom for him: So God the Holy Ghost is his comforter in all estates: so as he is

now

now the child of God, hath Jesus Christ to his elder brother, (*Psal.* 90.) and all the Angels in Heaven have charge over him.

2. Every true and lively member of Jesus Christ is reconciled to God, and justified in his sight; so as he hath the pardon and remission of his sins in the blood of Jesus Christ bestowed upon him; against whose faith the gates of hell shall never prevail. (*Rom.* 5. 1. *Rom.* 8. 1.)

3. Every true and lively Member of Jesus Christ, is partaker of all the merits of Christs sufferings and obedience, as if he had done them in his own person; Christs merits be his merits, Christs Death his death, Christs Righteousness is his Righteousness; so as God will not call him to account for his sins, or look on him as he is in himself; but wash his sins away in the blood of his Son, and behold him as he is covered with Christ's own Righteousness, and true Obedience.

And hence we have three wonderful benefits that we are ingrafted into Jesus Christ. There be three things which make every man miserable in God's sight.

Benefits which arise from our ingrafting into Jesus Christ.

First, the guiltiness of sin, whereby every sinner stands bound to undergo and suffer the curse of God for his sins, and breach of his Holy Law and Commandments. (*Gal.* 3. 10.)

Secondly, the corruption and filthiness of sin; which makes a man more loathsome than a Toad or Serpent in God's sight; (*Col.* 2.) so as this makes a man abominable, and all he doth exceeding loathsome.

Thirdly, There is the Everlasting curse of God due unto us for sin, which a carnal and unregenerate man is in danger of every day and hour, and which shall one day as certainly be executed upon the wicked, as now they live.

Now in Jesus Christ, by being united to him, and

being Members of his Mystical Body, we have three wonderful remedies against three fearful miseries.

1. For the Bond of Obligation against us, (Col. 2. 14.) he hath taken it away, and nailed it to his Cross, and crossed and cancelled the same with his own heart-blood.

2. For the stinking filthiness and corruption of sin, (Rom. 8. 1.) Christ hath both perfectly obeyed the Law for us, and also covered us in his own Righteousness, as *Jacob in Esau's Garment.*

3. For the most just and intolerable punishment; (*Esay 2. 5. Gal. 2. 20.*) he stood in our stead upon the Cross, and paid the full price and punishment for our sins: (*Rev. 1. 6.*) for when Christ suffered in our stead, it was as much as if we had suffered.

The fourth main benefit which every godly man hath, by being one with Christ in his Sanctification; which is a wonderful and supernatural work of Gods Holy Spirit; whereby every Godly man that is a true and lively member of Jesus Christ is freed both in mind, will, and affection from the bondage and slavery of sin and Satan, and is by little and little enabled and strengthened by the spirit of God, to will, desire, and to approve that which is good and holy, and to walk in it.

And this Sanctification hath two parts, Mortification and Vivification: by the former sin is every day more and more mortified, weakened, and consumed: by the latter inherent Righteousness is put into them, whereby they walk with God in newness of Life.

Now both these parts of Sanctification are wrought after this manner. First, after the Christian man is united to Christ, planted into him as into a stock, and become a living member of his Mystical Body, Christ Jesus then by his Spirit works in him two blessed works.

First, the Godly man ingrafted into Jesus Christ, receives power and strength from the death of Christ

to dye to all sin, so as the power of Christ's death and passion doth kill sin, and mortifie their corruptions: *For as many as are Baptized into Jesus Christ, are baptized into the similitude of his death,* Rom. 6. 4. So as the death of Christ is as a corrosive, to eat up and consume all rotten flesh and corruptions of our hearts; it eats our sin, and frets it away by little and little, till it be utterly abolished by death, when our Sanctification shall be perfected.

Secondly, every Godly man receiveth power and strength from Christ's Resurrection, to rise out of the grave of sin to newness of Life, to walk with God in Holiness and Righteousness. Even as we see all the parts of the body being joyned to the head, receive life and motion from it: Even so every Christian as so many parts and members of Christ Jesus the head, receive from him spiritual Life and motion, whereby they walk with God in new obedience and love.

Use 1. This Doctrine doth first of all condemn the Doctrine of the Adversary; That man hath free will in himself. We see here that this mystical Tree-man must be planted, he cannot plant himself: indeed man at his first creation had free-will himself, but since his fall, that Blessing is now fallen away, and utterly lost in man. And the proof of this point may appear unto us, if we will rest upon the Testimony of God himself, who professeth thus of man, that *the imagination of man's heart is evil, from his Youth up:* (Gen. 8. 21.) Now what good can be willed of him who is, First evil? Secondly, whose heart is a Fountain of all evil? Thirdly, whose imaginations, as streams of that Fountain are evil, and that not for a time, but ever, *from his Youth up?* So that now since the fall of man, the freedom of man's will to goodness is so enthralled and eclipsed, as that of our selves we cannot plant our selves into Grace, or into Christ: For we are as Trees, not planting

our selves, but must be planted by God, *For he shall be as a tree planted.*

Use 2. This magnifieth the free grace of God above mans free-will or merit, for whereas we do fail to plant our selves, yet as it appeareth by the Text, we are planted, (*Lam. 3. 21.*) It is the Lord that must work in us both the will and the deed; he must turn himself unto us, before we can turn unto him. (*Dan. 9. 9. Rom. 6. 23.*) This is acknowledged by the Prophet David in that worthy Prayer of his, when he saith, (*Eph. 2. 8. Luke 12. 32.*) *Compassion and forgiveness is in the Lord our God, albeit we have sinned against him.* This is taught by the Apostle when he saith, that *Everlasting Life is the free gift of God.* Yea, our Saviour Jesus Christ himself doth confirm the truth of this, when he saith, *every Plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.* (*Mat. 15. 13. Eph. 1. 6. 2 Ptt. 2. 10. 1 Ptt. 1. 4.*) Yea, it is worth our best observation, that the whole work of mans Salvation is called by the name of the work of Grace, or of Mercy. And therefore on what part soever we cast our eyes, we shall see the free grace and mercy of God: begin we at the foundation of all, *God's Eternal Election*, and come from thence to the period of all, *mans glorification*, and still ask the question from what Root each springeth? The answer must be from the free Grace and mercy of God: it was the free Grace and Mercy of God that he should Elect us. It was the free Grace and Mercy of God, that he should send Christ to redeem us; it was the free Grace and Mercy of God, that he should call us, that he should justify us, that he should sanctifie us, and what can it be but the free Grace and Mercy of God, that we shall be admitted to an *Inheritance immortal and undefiled*? So that we see here in the whole work of man's Redemption by Christ, there is no footing left for humane merit: For the free Grace and Mercy of God, and

and mans righteousness cannot possibly stand together, they will never admit any composition, and therefore we must conclude, for the whole work of Mans Redemption, and say, *Not unto us Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give the glory.*

Use 3. Lastly, seeing all men out of Christ be miserable, and those only that be in Christ be blessed, let us labour while we live, to be assured of this, that we are regenerate, that we are the true and lively Members of Jesus Christ. All men say they hope to be saved, but those that be planted and ingrafted into him, none but they be regenerate and born anew; none but such as do repent and believe in Christ Jesus, be the true lively Members of his Mystical Body.

And to the end that we be not deceived in so weighty a matter, (*John 3. 6. Rom. 1. 10. 1 Cor. 1. 21.*) but that we may assuredly know whether Christ dwells in our hearts by his Spirit, and we dwell in him by Faith, so as we be true and lively members of his mystical body, let us try it by these two wayes;

First, By the power of Christs death.

Secondly, By his Resurrection.

If thou be a member of Christ, thou shalt find the power of Christs death daily crucifying the old man, and eating out the corruption of thy Nature: For as we see in a mans Body, when there is much dead flesh in a wound they lay corrosive medicines to eat it out: so the death of Jesus Christ applied to our hearts by faith frets and eats out as a corrosive, the corruption of Nature, or dead flesh: (*Rom. 6. 1. 2. 3.*) So that Christ by his death maketh all his members dye unto sin, (*Rom. 6. 7, 8.*) so as they cannot live in the bondage and slavery of sin.

Now then, prove your selves, if you hope to be saved by Christ Jesus. But be not deceived, Christ dyed for none but such as be united to him, his true and lively members: And none are his members but such as find and feel the power of his death; to mortifie,

ſie, kill, and weaken the power of ſin and natural corruption. Do you then find ſin to die in you? Do you find the ſtrength of your corruption to be abated, the heat of it to be allayed? Do you feel Chriſts death fretting it out; ſo as you can ſay, I hate ſin, I abhor ſin, it is as bitter as Wormwood unto me? Do you find this change in your lives, that you do leave your old ſins, labouring to get out of ignorance, to leave ſwearing, lying, whoring, &c. then your caſe is good, it is an evident token that you are ingrafted into Jeſus Chriſt. But if on the contrary part, you find that ſin is as ſtrong now as ever it was, and that you are the ſame that you were ſeven years ago, not dying to ſin, and riſing to newneſs of life: O deceive not your own ſouls any longer, your caſe as yet is fearful, you be not the lively members of Jeſus Chriſt; but wild Olives, wild Branches, good for nothing but fuel for the fire.

Which bringeth forth her fruit in due ſeaſon.

THis is the ſecond property of that Tree whereunto a man is compared: namely, as it is well planted and ſeated by the River ſide, where it hath continual jayce and nourishment, and it is well watered: even ſo likewiſe it is fruitful, and yieldeth ſweet and pleaſant fruit to him that planted it, and that in due ſeaſon; even ſo the godly man being ingrafted into Jeſus Chriſt, as by a River ſide, and being a lively member of his myſtical body, he bringeth forth much good and pleaſant fruit, and that in due ſeaſon, when as it may beſt ſtand for the glory of God, and the good of man.

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Here we see then who are the true and lively member of Jesus Christ, who is the true godly man, and who is planted as this good Tree, in Jesus Christ the true Vine : Namely, such as be careful, and endeavour themselves continually to bring forth the blessed fruit of a godly and Christian life ; *every Tree is known by his fruit.* A Tree is not known by his rind or bark, nor branches, nor yet by his leaves : *But every Tree is known by his fruit.* *Mat. 12. 34.* A good Tree cannot but bring forth good fruit, and a bad Tree cannot but bring forth bad fruit : So every man is known by his fruit : He that is a godly man, and a true and lively member of Jesus Christ cannot but bring forth good fruit, even the fruit of good works and a godly life : So a wicked man cannot but bring forth bad fruit, the works of darkness, of a wicked and ungodly life. We see if a graft or serene be set into a good stock, and take a right, it will appear by the yielding of fruit. But if it do not prosper, then it withers and dries, and is good for nothing but for fire. So if any man seem to be a Christian, and to be a member of Christ Jesus, and yet bring not forth good fruit, surely his estate is fearful ; while he is unfruitful, he must be pulled away as a withered branch, and to the fire he must go. A true Christian must not be like the tree which Christ Jesus cursed. (*Mat. 21. 19.*) which had leaves and no fruit, but he must be like to the Tree planted by the River side, that will bring forth fruit in due season, Yea, that which is more, they bring forth fruit in their age, *Psal. 92. 14.* whereas, evil men, as the Apostle St. Paul saith, *2 Tim. 3. 13.* Wax worse and worse, and fall away from God dayly more and more ; This was the sum of the Doctrine of John Baptist to his hearers, that they would bring forth fruit worthy amendment of life, *Mat. 3. 8.* And the like is used by the Apostle, *Let your conversation be such, as becometh the Gospel of Christ, Phil. 1. 27.* And follow holiness, without which no man shall see God, *Hebrews 12. 14.* Herein saith our Saviour in the Gospel of St.

John.

John ch. 15. 8) is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit, and become my Disciples. And we know how Almighty God did plead this cause with the people of *Israel*, even in their unfruitfulness, notwithstanding his great cost and pains about them. This is the hope of the Husbandman, that after his cost and pains, he shall in the end reap some fruit, as a recompence of his labours : (*Mat. 8. 2.*) and shall we not think that God will require the same at our hands, we being the Vineyard of the Lord of Hosts ? For every Christian that liveth in the Church, is a Tree in Gods Orchard, he hath his room and standing ; The Lord watereth them with the dew of Heaven, the ministry of his Word and Gospel, and the use of his Sacraments. Now the Lord looks that we should yield him Fruit ; otherwise you know what became of the Fig-tree that had goodly leaves, but no fruit : it was sentenced with this curse, *Never fruit grow on thee more.* It will not go for payment with Almighty God, that we have been Baptized into Christs Nature : that we have a being here in the Church of God and are taken for good Trees before men : No, it is our bringing forth of much fruit, that must assure us that we are the members of Christ, and ingrafted into him.

Object. What be the Fruits that a godly man must bring forth?

Answer. They be the fruits of good works, they be the fruits of a godly life ; in a word, they be the blessed fruits of Faith, the fruits of Repentance, and the fruits of new Obedience.

First, Every true and lively member
Of Faith. of Jesus Christ, that is every Godly man or woman that is regenerate and born anew, and so a sound Christian, must labour to bring

bring forth the fruit of Faith. Now Faith is nothing else but the grace of God in a Mans heart, whereby he believes the promise of Salvation, and the promises of the Gospel, and applies them to his own soul, and therefore St. James saith, (*James 2.*) *show me thy faith by thy works* ; Dost thou delight in the Law of God, and love his word ? Dost thou delight in his worship, and calling on his name ? Dost thou find thy faith to *Purifie thy heart* ? (*Act. 15. 9.*) this is some part of that fruit which God requireth of thee : This fruit Peter brought forth : *Thou art Christ the Son of the living God*, *Mat. 6. 6.* This was the fruit that the Disciple John brought forth : (*Joh. 6. 69.*) *We believe and know that thou art Christ the Son of the living God.* And indeed, this is the first stone that is to be laid in the building up of a Christian, and therefore very fitly called a Foundation : and the *Colossians* are said to be *rooted, and built, and established in the faith*, *Col. 2. 27.* And indeed this is that pure Foundation that shall bear up the whole frame of our souls against all winds and weathers : It is the first work of change in the heart, and the first difference betwixt man and man, when God by *faith purifieth the heart* : It will suffer no unclean thoughts, unlawful lusts, or wandring motions to harbour there, guideth the affecti- *Note.* ons, love, hatred, sorrow, &c. such a man loves nothing more than God, hates nothing more than sin, rejoyceth in nothing more than in doing the will of God, and sorrows for nothing more than that he should offend so good and gracious a God. Again, it is the Foundation of all our obedience : *For without Faith it is impossible to please God*, (*Heb. 11.*) and without it we can neither pray, hear, or perform any duty that shall be acceptable with God.

Secondly, The second is the Fruit of Repentance, whereby a man is humbled for sins past, and is afraid of sin in time to come : This fruit of *Of Repentance.*

Repentance is of absolute necessity to Salvation, according to that of our Saviour, *except ye repent ye shall all perish, Luk. 13. 5.* And only Godly sorrow must work this true Repentance in a Man : (2 Cor. 7. 10.) *Godly sorrow causeth Repentance in a man to Salvation :* And therefore in the Scriptures are recorded the mournings of the Godly in the dayes of their humiliation. *Davids fainting, Psalm 6. 6. Ezekias's chattering like a Crane, Esay. 38. 14. Job abhorring himself in dust and ashes. Peter weeping bitterly, Matt. 26. 75. Mary Magdalen washing Christs feet with her tears, Luk. 7. 38. And Paul crying out O wretched man that I am. Rom. 7. 24.* We must mourn with these here, (Psalm 126. 5) if we would rejoyce with them hereafter : and surely if there were neither Heaven nor Hell, neither reward nor punishment, yet the Godly would sorrow for sin, for offending their good and gracious God, and loving Father. Besides this sorrow in a Godly man for his sins past, he is exceeding afraid of sin in time to come, as *David*, who prayed unto God so earnestly, that he would *establishe him with his free spirit, Psalm 51. 10.* That seeing he had such woful experience of his own weakness, he prays unto the Lord that he would give him his preventing grace, that he might never fall in the like sin again. So the Godly *Israelites in Ezra* his time, *Ezra. 9. 10.* When they had with grief of heart bewailed their sins unto God, they resolved to make a *Covenant with God*, and solemnly to bind themselves to put away their strange Wives, whereby they had so much dishonoured him. And so it is with all the faithful, even as a good Child having by his untowardness vexed his Father, is careful afterwards to please him again by all means possible. Well then, dost thou find these fruits of true Repentance in thee ? Art thou grieved, and even pained at the heart for thy wicked life, for thy ignorance, unbelief, hardness of heart, thy neglect of prayer, and calling on Gods name ? Art thou grieved

ed for want of reverence in Gods worship? for thy abusing God, namely, by swearing cursing, and bannitig? for contempt of his Word and Sacraments? for prophaning of his Sabbath, careless governing of thy Family? for thy malice, unbelief, uncleanness, proud and covetous thoughts; drunkenness, uncleanness, and the like? Again, dost thou find in thee an earnest desire to walk with God in obedience to all his Commandments to live in no known sin, but in all things to please God to the utmost of thy power? These be the fruits of Righteousness, whereby we are known to be of God.

Thirdly, The third is the fruit of *New Obedience*, or of a godly life, both in Obedience of Gods Laws, in the first and second Table: Christ makes this the ear-mark of his Sheep, *To hear his voice, and follow him, Joh. 10.* And we are willed by the Author of the Epistle unto the Hebrews, *To cast away every thing that presseth down, and the sin that hangeth so fast on and to run with patience the race that is set before us. (Psal. 119. 32.)* This is Godly *Dauids Resolution*, *I will run the way of thy Commandments;* And David describing the true Worship of God, saith, *They go on from strength to strength, serving God in truth of heart, without hypocrisie: (Psal. 88. 4.)* And it is said here, that the fruit of a godly man doth never fade: And howsoever the work of Mortification is never perfected in this Life, but that the remnants and reliques of sin will still remain, even in the godly themselves, yet they ever sin with grief of heart; and Christs death doth set such work against all sin, that the regenerate man can truly say: *It is not I but sin that dwelleth in me:* So then if thou desirest to please God in all his Commandments at all times, and in all places, and do all his duties of love unto men required in the Commandments of the second Table, shewing thy fruits in doing of good to the poor distressed Members of Jesus Christ, feeding, cloathing, and comforting them in their need; in thy

thy general calling to bring forth the fruit of Godly-ness, to be much and often exercised in prayer, hearing, reading, meditating, &c. As also in thy particular calling to do thy duty with a true Faith and a good Conscience, without fraud, guile, deceit, &c. These be the fruits that are required in all those that are the Members of Jesus Christ, and ingrafted into his mystical body.

Use 1. This Doctrine doth flatly condemn all such for unfruitful and barren Trees, as bring forth no fruit of a godly, righteous, and a religious life ; such as live in continual ignorance, blindness, hardness of heart, in contempt of the Word, prophanation of the Sabbath : Our civil honest men which are so much admired ; (if they be not good Christians, who should ? And if they be not saved, I know not who should go to Heaven :) Well, every good Tree brings forth good fruit : (*Mat. 7. 17.*) Where be your good fruits ? No fruits of Faith, no fruits of Repentance, nor new obedience ; but instead thereof, the fruits of infidelity, and hardness of heart, and disobedience : Alas ! that poor souls should go thus blindfold to Hell ! To think that such should be saved, what then should become of Hell ? as though a man might be a true member of Jesus Christ, and ingrafted into his mystical Body, and yet be barren of good fruit : No, no, it cannot be, for there is such a lively power in this stock of life, Christ Jesus, that they who are once ingrafted into him, bring forth fruit incontinently : As we may see in the Thief upon the Cross, (*Luk. 23.*) what fruit he bare in an instant of time : First, Confession of his own sins : Secondly, Reproving the sins of his Companion : Thirdly, Clearing Christ to be innocent : Lastly, Praying that Christ would remember him when he came into his Kingdom : and this we may see in *Zachens, Lydia, &c.* (*Mat. 22. Acts 16.*) Who were no sooner converted, but brought forth fruit incontinently : and yet we see
how

how many dry, fruitless, and barren Trees deceive the world, as the Fig-tree Christ. Oh! he is a very honest man, keeps a very good house, doth no body harm, a very kind, and civil honest man, &c. (Mat. 3. 10.) Well, is this all? This will not serve to prove him a good Christian: *For now is the Axe put to the root of the Tree, every Tree that brings not forth good fruit, is hewn down and cast into the fire. (Job. 15. 6. Esay 5.)* We know what became of the Fig-tree, that had goodly leaves and fair shewes, was it not accursed? and the Tree that the Husbandman digged and pruned, and watered; was it not in the end hewn down, and reserved for no other use but fuel for the fire; and this will be the end of many of our civil honest men, (so called) whatsoever they think of themselves, or others conceive of them.

Oh then, how fearful a thing is it to be Trees bringing forth leaves and no fruit, it is the condition of all Hypocrites: For they shall find at last, what it is to be as a barren Tree in the Lords Vineyard, for that shall be taken away from them which they seem to have: as proud *Jezebel* and her painted face shall both of them perish together: On the other side, the Elect of God, that bring forth fruit as well as leayes, they shall be both preserved together, and grow in grace and knowledge here in this life, and at the last, when these days of sin shall have an end, they themselves shall be gathered into the place of rest, the Sion of the Lord, and their works shall follow them, *Rev. 14. 13.* And howsoever works justify not a man, being the best of them weak and imperfect here; yet by our works, as the evidence of our vertues, we shall be judged at the last day.

Use 2. This then doth plainly shew, that their estate is ten times worse and more fearful, that bring forth nothing but cursed and bitter fruits of sin and wilful disobedience. A Farmer or Husband man will not suffer a Tree to grow in his Orchard, if it either
bring

bring no fruit, or else bitter, sower, or unsavory fruit, so bad as none can eat them, for there is no use of them, but will hew it down, and cast it into the fire. Oh! then *Consider this ye that forget God*: ye that live in continual practise of sin and iniquity, you that bring forth no other fruit, but horrible oaths, blasphemy, drunkenness, whoredom, &c. that by the axe of God Almightyes vengeance ye shall be hewn down, and to the fire ye must go. If Trees that be barren and bring forth no fruit, shall be destroyed and cast into the fire; how much more such miserable and sinful wretches, whose life is nothing else but an heaping of iniquity unto iniquity, and all prophane-ness against God and Man? (*Mat. 3. 10. and 25. 14.*) If the rich man were damned that did not give of his bread to poor *Lazarus*, good Lord what shall become of those that take away, and as it were grind the face of the poor? In a word, if he, not being fruitful in good works, shall be punished so sharply and severely what shall then become of those that even abound in all manner of most abominable sin and iniquity? Oh! *consider this ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you.*

Use. 3. Let this admonish every man to try himself, to look into his own soul: Thou art a Tree in Gods Orchard, the Lord thy Husband, thee, doth bestow cost on thee, to water and dress thee by his Word and Sacraments, Mercies and Judgments; well, he comes to seek fruit of thee; it may be he hath come three, four, seven, or ten years together, and still thou hast no fruit, but remainest still a barren Tree. Well, the Lord will not always stay and wait for fruit at thy hand, *Luk. 14. 9.* But will say to the Vine-dresser, *Cut me this fruitless and barren Tree down, why doth it cumber the ground, and keep it barren?* As it is in the fifth Chapter of *Esay*, *The ground that receiveth the rain that comes, often upon it, and brings forth fruit, meet for him that dresses it, receives a blessing; but that*

that brings forth thorns and bryars, is sentenced to a curse, whose end is to be burned, *Hib. 6. 7, 8.* If ye have not yet begun, begin now to bring forth fruit, I mean the fruits of Faith, the Fruits of Repentance, and the fruits of Obedience, of a Godly Life and Conversation; if ye have begun already, oh labour then to do it more, to bring more and better fruit, to abound in good works: Such Trees as these are, shall be spared, and not destroyed, (*Deut. 20. 19.*) But such Trees as bring forth no fruit, *Hew them down, why cumber they the ground?*

In due season.

THat is in time convenient; when it may most serve for Gods glory, and the good of our Neighbour. So that here we have a further condition of this tree, set out by the circumstance of the time: *That it bringeth forth fruit in due season;* And we know it is a commendable thing in our ground, and so in our Trees; that they bring forth their fruit in due season. If our Corn should not be ripe till the Summer were over, or our Trees begin to bud in the Spring, before Summer come, men would look to reap but small store of fruits: Well, as this is commended in our ground, and in our Trees; so it is no less commendable in our souls, and a true note of a godly man, and a blessed proceeding from his ingrafting into Jesus Christ, that he likewise bring forth fruit in due season.

Doct. 6. In this observe the godly care, and the heavenly wisdom of a godly man, and one that is the child of God: that he waits and watches his time, and then readily takes the occasion to do good: Every thing hath his

time

time and season: *Seek the Lord while he may be found, and call upon him while he is near, Esay. 55. 6, 7,* Out of which words we gather, that as there is a time when the Lord will be found of them that seek him, (which time is a Godly Mans *season*, for now doth he seek the Lord) so there is a time when the Lord will not be found; and that a Blessing cannot be obtained at his hands, though a man seek it with tears, as *Esau*, did, for so saith the Lord; *Because I have cryed and called unto you, and you would not hear; Therefore the time shall come, that ye shall cry and call unto me, and I will not answer, Prov. 1. 24, 28.* Again, *Exhort ye one another dayly, while it is called to day, Heb. 3. 13,* For our Hearing for our Reading, Praying, Singing, and Meditating, &c. There are times for each of these, which the godly man doth in no wise omit: and of this there is great reason; for shall we not be careful of the performance of our duties herein, as we are in our own affairs? in our plowing and sowing, our reaping and gathering in, our putting off our Cattel; and tilling our ground: Men know their times, and take their opportunities, even then when it shall stand with their best advantage: Oh that we could be as wise for our souls, to purchase the true treasure which will make us rich unto Salvation, as we are for these temporal things which do last but for a time! surely, it is the care of a godly man: as the Marriner watches for the wind, (*Gen. 42. Esay. 1.*) and when it comes, hoyses up sail: As the Captain, and souldier in the field wait their times, yea, and as the Birds, Swan, and Crane, the Beasts, Swallow, and Pismire, wait their times, and then take the occasion and season offered: So the Child of God doth in his Heavenly Wisdom wait the time, and take the occasion to do good: as *Joseph* in the seven years of plenty, provided for the seven years of Dearth; so the godly man bringeth forth fruit in *due season*, that is, in time convenient. As when the Lord calls man to repent, he repents; when occasion is to pray, he will pray; when the

the season is to hear, he will hear ; when to reprove, he will reprove ; when to give to the poor, he hath his hand ready ; so as when occasion is offered, he takes in, Yea, he waits and watches for it, as Lot did to entertain strangers at his Tent door, *Gen. 17.* and as the poor man in the Gospel, who lay at the Pool of *Bethesda*, waiting for the moving of the water, *John 5.*

Use 1. This reproves the folly and carelessness of most men, who neither wait the time, nor yet take the occasion offered : The Lord calls men to prayer, to call on his name, they make light of it : The Lord calls men to hear his word, men contemn it : The Lord offers occasion to reprove sin, they will not open their mouths to reprove the swearer, blasphemer, cursed speaker, &c. The Lord offers occasions to relieve the poor, they shut up the bowels of Mercy against them, in the matters of the World. Oh ! Men are wise to take their time, the Merchant, the Marriner, the Husbandman, &c. But in the matters of God, which concern the Salvation of our souls, we are like to that sick man, that let every man step in before him. Well, if we belong unto God, it will grieve us at the heart, that we have not done our duty, that we have omitted our occasions of doing good : Whether to hear, read, pray, reprove, or to give unto the poor : Well, *let us now seek the Lord while he is to be found* : Let us not with the slothful servant, defer till our Masters coming. How many be there that say, that they will now live at ease, in joy, and will take their pleasure, and follow their sports, and when they be old, then they will repent, and serve God, and give themselves to prayer ? but let none think if they do spend the flower of their youth in lusts and pleasures, (*Ecc. 12. 1.*) in the service of sin and Satan, that God will accept of their rotten old age ; no, the devil shall have the dregs, as well as the wine.

Use 2. Hence we observe in the second place, that Gods children are never void of the fruits of Faith, but have them in them continually, to their endless comfort : Other Trees oftentimes fall to degenerate, and to grow out of kind, and if they do hold out a long time, yet age at the last makes them to decay, and to dye ; albeit you dig, and dung, and water them never so much, it cannot keep them from wasting and withering : but it is not so with godly men, which are planted by the Rivers of water, in Gods Church ; for even in their old age they bring forth abundance and store of fruit, albeit they be never so old, yet whensoever the Season requires some Fruit of a Godly Man, he is ever ready to perform the same, being that he is continually watered by the working of his Spirit : And this is confirmed by that of our Saviour Christ, (Job. 15. 1, 2.) *I am the true Vine, and my Father is the Husbandman, every branch that beareth not fruit in me, he taketh away, and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit : So that being once Planted by these rivers of waters, we shall then incontinently bring forth fruit.*

His leaf shall not fade.

The third property of this Tree, whereunto the godly man is compared. **T**His is the third point of the description of this tree, to the which a godly man is compared ; namely, by the flourishing estate of it, *That her leaves do not fall.* They wither not, nor dry not, but always flourish, and are green : Of this sort is the Olive Tree, the Bay Tree, the Lawrel Tree, and the Box Tree, they are always green and flourishing, the heat of the Summer, nor the cold of the Winter doth not parch

parch or wither them, but they keep their vigour and colour at all seasons. Now this doth signifie unto us the constancy, and the perseverance of the godly: (Psal. 92. 12.) For as the tree planted thus by the fresh springing waters, doth always flourish, and is ever green, neither is it nipped either with the heat of Summer, or cold of Winter: So the godly man that is truly regenerate, he is constant, and doth persevere even to the end.

Doct. 7. Hence we learn, that it is not enough for a man or woman to begin well, or to take some liking of Religion, to have some good motions, as to reverence good Ministers, to desire to hear them, to joyn with the people of God in prayer, to bring forth some good fruit in outward Reformation of life, &c. unless he persevere, persist, and go on unto the end. (*Mat. 24. 2.*)

*Perseverance
required in
each child of
God.*

He that endures to the end shall be saved: And (Rev. 2. 10.) Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a Crown of life. (Ex. 18. 24.) If a righteous man leave his righteousness, &c. (Luk. 9. 62.) He that putteth his hand to the Lords Plough and looketh back, is not worthy of the Kingdom of Heaven. Again, (2 Pet. 2. 2.) It had been better for them that they had not known the ways of godliness, then afterwards to fall away: And therefore in the Scriptures, such as have had some beginnings, and fallen away, are noted to have been exceeding wicked men. (Mat. 27.) As we see in Judas, first a Preacher and an Apostle, a man well esteemed that had excellent gifts, to preach, pray, and cast out Devils, afterwards an Hypocrite, a thief a traitor, a reprobate: (Mat. 6. 20.) Herod had many good things in him at first, revered John Baptist, heard him gladly, did many things at his request, yet afterwards a bloody persecutor. (2 Tim. 4. 10.) Demas once a sound professor as it seemed, and one that was dear unto Paul, but afterwards left his profession,

and sell in love with the World, like the Church of *Ephesus*, lost their first love, and grew worse and worse : So that let all men know, that though they have many excellent gifts and graces of Gods Spirit, Knowledge, Faith, Repentance, Zeal, Patience : yet all is nothing worth, unless they hold out in faith, Repentance, and Obedience, and maintain faith, and a good Conscience even unto the end. If a Souldier should be cunning and skilful, knowing how to fight, and handle his weapon well, and yet should turn his back, and play the coward, he is but a cowardly souldier, and not worthy of the Crown : And therefore it is a special duty required of every Christian, to continue stedfast ; *Be thou faithful unto the end, and I will give thee a Crown of life.*

Hence we see that it is a dangerous thing to revolt, and go backwards in matters of Religion, to lose our first love : It is a fearful sign of a reprobate and cast-away, when men slack hand, and slip neck out of collar, grow careless in the service and worship of God : For a Man to grow there is some hope, though he do but creep on in Religion ; but for a man to go backward, or to stand at a stay is dangerous : For it is certain, not to go forward in Gods matters, is to go backward ; not to increase, is to decrease ; not to grow better, is to wax worse. It is a hard matter to make a good beginning, we are not easily brought to set a foot forwards in the ways of Godliness, but then to trip while we are in our journey, and to wax weary of well-doing, this is a fearful sin. Well, then, lay this Doctrine to heart, examine your selves, see how ye grow, whether as good Trees in Gods Orchard, being so watered with the Rivers of water of the Sanctuary, and fed in the green pasture. If a Child go to School, and do not increase in Knowledge, Learning and Education, all money and pains is ill bestowed. If a Tree be planted, and do grow worse and worse, it is time to cut it down. Well, we be Trees in Gods Orchard, the Lord hath plant-
ed

ed us by the *Rivers of waters*, when a great number about us be in a barren Soyl, and have no means : And for us not to grow, but rather to decay, it were the next way to provoke God to bring his Axe, and to hew it down : And therefore prove how you hold your own, how you grow in Knowledge, Faith, Repentance and Obedience ; and above all things, take heed that you decay not in grace, go not backward, lose not your first love. I fear me, it may be said of us, as Christ said sometime to the Church of *Sardis*, *Thou hast a name that thou livest, take heed thou be not dead*, *Rev. 3. 1.* Repent therefore and amend, that the things in thee ready to dye may be recovered.

Use 2. Here is a notable means to try Hypocrites from good Christians ; he that is sound-hearted and truly humbled, and regenerate, will persevere, and grow in Grace, hold out to the end, so as their works shall be more at last than at first ; yea, the Godly man is like the tall Cedar, the more it is shaken with storms and tempests it takes the deeper root, and it grows the faster ; like the Cammomile, the more it is trodden on, the more it grows ; or like some precious stones, never shine brighter, than in the darkest night ; or like perfume, never so sweet as when it is rubbed, and chafed ; or Gold, never brighter than when it is fined in the fire. The Word of God is plain for this : *Abraham* in all his Journies and Travels, though he met with many and dangerous enemies, yet he was most constant in his Faith. *David* in all his troubles yet still was Religious. The Children in the fire most Glorious Conquerours. *Daniel* in the Den, a Blessed Man. *Job* in his greatest extremity a Patient Man. *Paul*, *Peter*, and the rest of the Apostles never shewed themselves more worthy Men than in great Tryals, and storms of Persecutions : So that you see a godly man is well compared to a strong Oak, or Cedar, or rather a Palm-tree that never loseth his Leaves, Fruit, and Greenness ; no, not

in the bitter storms and blasts of Winter. So the Godly man doth not shrink in the wetting, like to a piece of Sale-cloath, but doth persevere, and is constant even unto the end, *His works are more at last than at first.*

But come to an Hypocrite, a counterfeit Christian, a false Professor of the Gospel, you shall see they be like painted Sepulchres, fair without, but foul within; like to empty Vessels, which make a great noise, and have no liquor in them; like a piece of Sale-cloath, which being drawn out, and set on the Tenters, will quickly shrink in the wetting: They be like to false Friends; that will hang on like burs, while there is some gain to be gotten; but they will fail a man when he hath most need of them: so long as it is fair weather, and there is no danger in professing the Gospel, they will seem forward, and very zealous, as though they were the only men of the world; but if there come any matter of danger, if the Sun grow hot, or if storms or tempests do arise, that is, troubles and persecutions for Religions sake, and the Gospels sake, they will then hide their heads, and profess no longer. All the goodly leaves and shews they made will wither, and come to nothing; then they will appear in their kind. Such our Saviour Christ likeneth unto Corn in the stony ground, which makes a fair shew for a time, (*Luk. 8.*) but when the Sun arises, it withers away: Even so these kind of professors, if any tryal, or trouble do come for the Gospels sake, or that for their Profession they should lose the favour of some great man. Oh! then they think it the safest way to sleep in a whole skin; then they wither away, and then they shew they did profess the Gospel, not in truth and sincerity, for love of the Gospel, but for some other respect; namely, for some hope of gain or honour, and favour of men, or for praise of the World.

Use 3. Let this admonish us all, as we do love our own souls, (*Mat. 24. 3. Rev. 2. 10. Luk. 24. 26. Mat. 7. 20. 2 Chron. 24. 17.*) to labour for constancy and perseverance, that we may hold our unto the end, that our works may be more at last than at first, that we cast our account before hand what it will cost us to be Religious indeed, that we be sure to dig so deep that we lay the Foundation of our Faith upon the Rock Christ: and for want of this Godly Care and Circumspection aforehand, many have at the first given their names to Christ, who afterwards, when they were to take up the Cross of Christ, have gone out, and turned their back upon Christ. *Saul* began well, but afterwards waxed worse, and in the end became an open Persecutor. *Joash* behaved himself uprightly all the days of *Jojobadab*, and repaired the house of the Lord, but after his death he fell to Idolatry. What did it profit *Lets* Wise to go out of *Sodom*, insomuch as afterwards she looked back, and was turned into a Pillar of Salt? So then we see here, that it is not enough to purpose well, it is not enough to begin well, neither is it enough to proceed well, it is required of us to persevere well, and to continue in a constant and settled course, even unto the end of our days.

Doff. 8. Last of all, in that it is said here, that the *Leaves*, that is to say the faith of a Christian, shall never fade. Hence I gather, that no elect child of God, that is truly regenerate and born anew, and a lively member of Christs Mystical Body can perish, and finally fall away. For whom God predestineth, him he calleth; whom he calleth, he justifieth, whom he justifieth, he glorifieth, *Rom. 8. 30.* The gift and calling of God is without Repentance. My sheep hear my voice, and follow me: And I give unto them Eternal Life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man take them out

of my hand, Job. 10. 27, 28, 29. And the reason is, we bear not the root, but the root beareth us. Our Salvation doth not depend upon our selves, for then indeed we were in danger to fall away every moment of an hour; but it dependeth upon him, because we are in him, and through him we grow and increase, yea, the older we be in Christ, the more do we fasten our Root, and flourish. They which are planted in the Courts of the Lord, shall flourish in their old Age, and bring forth much fruit.

And whereas other branches are many times pulled from their stock, either by the violence of the wind, by the hands of men, or at the least consumed by length of time; it shall not be so with them that are in Christ; for they are kept by him, as the Root bearing Branches. Because I am not altered nor changed, therefore you are not consumed, Oh ye sons of Jacob! And therefore right happy is the state of that man, who is in Christ Jesus; For neither life nor death, things present, nor things to come, shall separate him from the love of God, Rom. 8. 38.

And this comfort is confirmed Arguments to to us by most sure Arguments, prove a Christians which are to be observed, as followeth: The first is taken from the Nature of Almighty God: He is faithful, which hath promised. (Phil. 1. 6.) And I am persuaded (saith the Apostle) that he who hath begun this good work, will perform it until the day of Christ.

The second is taken from the nature of that life, which Christ Communicateth to his Members, (Rom. 6. 9.) We know that Christ being raised from the dead, dyeth no more. This Life of Christ is Communicated to us, so that it is not we that live now, but Christ that liveth in us.

The third is taken from the nature of that seed whereof we are begotten: (1 Pet. 1. 23.) We are born anew, not of mortal seed, but immortal. Now as the

the seed, so is the life that comes by that seed, our life, therefore must needs be immortal.

Use 1. This confuteth the detestable Doctrine of the Papists, who hold and teach, that a man elected, called, justified, sanctified, may for ever fall away, and be damned : That he which to day is the dear child of God, to morrow may become the child of the Devil, to day a member of Christ, to morrow a limb of the Devil ; to day an heir of Salvation, to morrow a child of Damnation. Now what Doctrine can be more devilish and uncomfortable ? This is nothing else but to set up a Gibbet to torment the poor souls of Gods Children, to overthrow the Nature of Faith, to make God feeble and weak, or foolish and unwise, which is manifest Blasphemy : but we see here, the word of God tells us this cannot be : (2 Pet. 1. 10. Psal. 15. 4. Rom. 8. 1.) *For what shall separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus ? Nothing.*

Use 2. This may serve to reprove another sort of men, who are ready to abuse this Doctrine : Tush, saith the carnal and loose Christian, it skils not then how a man lives, whether well or ill, he that is elected, and is a member of Christ shall be saved ; and he that is rejected shall be damned, though he live never so well : Therefore they take liberty to sin, and make Conscience of no sin whatsoever. But they must know, that God decrees a man as well to the means as to the end : And it is impossible a man should be elected and called, but he must live well ; so he that is not Elected and called, cannot live well : And it is all one, as if a man should never eat or drink, and yet hope to live and like well ; or lying in the fire or water, and using no means to come out, should not perish. But we must know, that the end and the means must go together : And for a man to neglect or reject the means, it is in vain

Or him to hope to be saved : For if thou belong to God, thou shalt in time be called and sanctified. And where this work is not already wrought, that man is as yet in the state of damnation both of Soul and Body.

Use 3. Here is matter of endless comfort to every true child of God, that truly repents and believes in Jesus Christ, that howsoever through the malice of Satan, and the temptations of the Devil, the allurements of the world, and the corruptions of our flesh, we may grievously sin and fall ; yet, *There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ*, Rom. 8. 1. *The Gates*, that is, all the power of Hell, *shall not prevail against us*, Mat. 1. 6. If ever thou perceivest the sound work of grace in thee, findest Jesus Christ to dwell in thy heart by faith, so that thou hatest all sin, and desirest in all things to please God ; though Satan rage and storm, and all the Gates of Hell rise up against thee, yet thou mayest comfort thy self in the Lord, and say with Paul, *there is no condemnation to me that am in Christ, which walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit* : Thou mayest Triumph with Paul, and say, *who shall lay any thing to the charge of Gods chosen ? And, if God be with us, who can be against us*. And again, *I am perswaded nothing can separate me from the love of God in Christ Jesus* : No, nor sin, nor death it self. O happy then, and blessed is the state of that man who is in Christ ! *Neither life, nor death, things present, nor things to come, shall separate him from the love of God*.

And whatsoever he doth shall prosper.

Here is described another part of the blessedness of a Godly man, containing the mercy and goodness of God unto him, in the lawful things wherein he hath to deal, that God doth of his infinite

nite mercy and love, direct and prosper this man, giving a Blessing and good success of all he takes in hand; and this mercy all men desire, to attain prosperity, and good success in their estates, all men desire it; lo, here it is promised.

Dock. 9. Hence we learn, that it is not in vain for a man to be Godly, to be Religious, to walk with God, and to keep Faith and a good Conscience before God and Man, but it is the only way to be blessed, to have the blessing of God upon us in our places and callings, and to have good success in all things that we take in hand. This is taught by Moses unto the people of Israel: *If thou wilt obey diligently the voice of the Lord thy God, and observe and do all his Commandments which I command thee this day, &c. all these Blessings shall come on thee, and overtake thee, if thou shalt obey the voice of the Lord thy God. Blessed shalt thou be in the City, and blessed in the field; Blessed shall be the fruit of thy body, and the fruit of thy ground and the fruit of thy Cattel, &c. and in all that thou puttest thy hand unto. (Deut. 28. the whole Chapter)* Thus did the Lord unto Joshua, *Let not the book of the Law depart out, &c. for thou shalt then make thy way prosperous, and then shalt thou have good success.* *Joh. 1. 7, 8.* And the Apostle saith, *That godliness hath the promise of this life, and the life to come, 2 Tim. 4. 8.* If you would see the promise performed, look into the History of the Godly Kings; *Dauid, Psal. 128. Josiah, Jer 22. Ezekiah, &c. 1 Chr. 28. 8, 9.* who so long as they walked with God, and kept his Commandments, and were truly Godly and Religious, how did they prosper and grow in the World? how did God bless them in all that they put their hands unto? This we may clearly behold in *Josiah*, who was a godly and a vertuous man, and how did the Lord prosper *Josiah*? *His Master saw that*

that the Lord was with him; and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand, Gen. 39. 1, 2. It is said of Job, that he was a just and an upright man, one that feared God, and eschewed evil, Job 1. 1. And it is rehearsed, how God did bless him in all his substance, which was very great; so as the Devil confessed, that Job did not serve God for naught, but that God did therefore bless him, Job 1. 9. And the reason is, Psalm 119. 9. because the godly man takes nothing in hand without the warrant of Gods Word. Secondly, he doth that is good in a good manner, in Faith, and hearty Obedience; And lastly, the end of all his actions tends to the Glory of God, and the good of his neighbour. And whatsoever he shall do (shall prosper.

Objection. But it will be Objected against this Doctrine, that this seems not to be so; for do we not see that wicked men, ungodly wretches, hainous and monstrous sinners, that they flourish in the World, that they live in great prosperity, delight and pleasures? This made David and Jeremy to expostulate the matter with God: (Psalm 73. 3, 4. Psalm 37. 36.) Why do the wicked flourish in the world, and why do such prosper? And again, (Jer. 12. 12. Mal. 3. 13. Job 21. 7.) Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? why are they in wealth that rebelliously transgress? It grieved both David and Jeremy, and made them to fret inwardly, as though God seemed to favour wicked men, and to dislike and discountenance the righteous and the godly.

Ans. For answer, you are to know that there is a double kind of prosperity, the one we may call spiritual, proceeding from Gods favour and love unto us in Christ, and declared principally in the bestowing on us the spiritual and heavenly Graces of his Spirit, as Faith, Repentance, Sanctification, &c. unto the which the Lord also addeth the blessings and benefits of

of this life, so far forth as the Lord shall judge them meet and expedient for his Children here on earth.

There is another kind of prosperity which is earthly, a thriving only in earthly things, as Wealth, Honour, Credit, &c. all which may befall and do befall the wicked men, and ungodly: But David speaketh here of the former, promisetht that this shall be one part of his happiness, that he shall have good success; that is, a plentiful measure of all spiritual graces that shall make him rich unto salvation, and in earthly matters also, according to his portion: So that howsoever a wicked man may esteem riches, honour, prosperity, and the like, to be the best; yet the godly man saith with David, *Lord shew me thy countenance*; his prosperity being double inward and outward, the chiefest of all is Heavenly. (1 Pet. 1. 4.)

As for the things of this life; (Psal. 4. 3.) the godly doth prosper, (1 Tim. 4. 8.) and the Lord doth give him good success.

First, whether the godly man have little or much, he hath it from Gods right hand, as a blessing and a favour of God, given unto him as a right in Jesus Christ: whereas a wicked man, though he have never so much, he hath it from Gods left hand, that is, with anger and displeasure, with the secret curse of God.

Secondly, the godly man, hath he little or much, he hath it with the peace of Conscience and Joy in the Holy Ghost. David having his portion from the Lord as a blessing saith, (Psal. 4. 7. Psal. 37. 16.) *That the Lord made him more joyful thereby, than those whose Corn and Oyl and Wine abounded.* (Psal. 128.) *A small thing that the righteous hath, is better than great riches of the ungodly.*

Thirdly, the godly mans estate is permanent and durable, his prosperity doth not ebb and flow, but continueth and lasteth: but the prosperity of the wicked is too uncertain; yea, when they be at the highest, suddenly the Lord sets them in a slippery place,

place, and down they fall, Pharaoh, Sennacherib, Nebuchadnezzar, &c. And their fall is the more fearful, because it is not only sudden, but in the height of their prosperity, sometimes by Gods vengeance upon them, sometimes by one means, sometimes by another.

Use 1. This may serve to stop the mouths of the common Atheists of the world, who do say, That it is in vain to serve God, and lost labour to be Religious, (Mal. 3. 1.) no fruit in leading of a godly Life: For so they say, if they should follow Sermons, and spend their time in prayer, and calling on God, in reading and meditating on his Word, they should beg when they have done, and such men never prosper in the world; but that is a false accusation. Did not Abraham prosper, and Lot; Joseph, Job, David, Ezekiah, and the like? even because they were godly, therefore they prospered: yea, only the godly man may be truly said to prosper, because he alone is in the favour of God, he alone hath his prosperity from the right hand of God, he alone hath them as blessings, and in the favour and love of God: whereas the wicked and ungodly man hath riches from the left hand of Gods anger and displeasure to him, they have them with no comfort, nor peace, but with great vexation, trouble, and disquietness, and they spend them with great pain and sorrow.

Use 2. This may reprove the foolish brag and boast of wicked men, who therefore think that they be highly in Gods favour, because he lets them attain to great preferment, honour, and dignity here, and that therefore God doth favour and love them. Poor soul, hast thou no better reason to prove thy self in Gods favour? Cham was a rich man, so was Esau a great man in the World, Pharaoh, Herod, Nebuchadnezzar, and many others, and yet never the more beloved of God, but wicked and damnable, (Luk. 16.)

as the glutton. Nay, know unless thou be a godly man, thy riches will be thy bane, and they be tokens of Gods vengeance, to make thee more proud, cruel and wicked, unclean and filthy: yea, to feed thy soul to the day of slaughter.

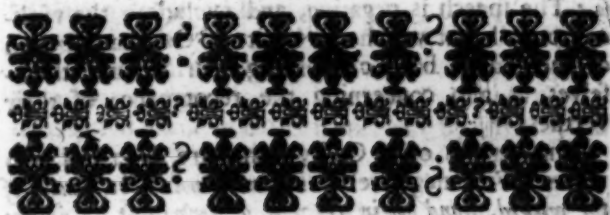
Use 3. This should admonish all godly men to take heed how they fret and grieve at the vain and uncertain prosperity of the wicked and ungodly, it is that which troubles the godly much, as it did *Job*, *Jeremiah*, *David*, and *Asaph*, who wondred, and were very much grieved at this, to see the ungodly flourish, and to abound in honour, dignity, wealth, authority, the only men of the world: and on the contrary part, (*Psal.* 9. 35.) the ungodly in misery, trouble, &c. (*Psal.* 137. 17.) But when they went into the house of the Lord, then understood they the end of those men; namely, that God did set them in slippery places, and that their end was fearful. And as *Job* saith, (*Job* 21. 13.) they spend their dayes in pleasure, and suddenly go down to hell. Let us then consider well of these things, and not to grieve at the wicked because they prosper, or to be drawn hereby to think the better of them, or their vile courses, because they flourish a while; or the worse of the godly, because they endure some trouble: but consider their latter end, and in the mean time to possess our souls with patience, notwithstanding the jollity of the wicked, for it is but for a time, like a great thistle, which starts up in Summer, and at the coming of Winter is gone: or at the poor state of the godly, for in the end they shall be exalted.

Use 4. Last of all, if we desire to thrive in the World, to prosper, and to have the blessing of God on our labours, the best, yea, and the surest way is to become Religious, to walk with God, to lead a godly life; (*1 Tim.* 4. 8. *Deut.* 28. 1, 2. *Job.* 1. 7. *Psal.* 127.) the Example of *Abraham*, *Joseph*, *Josuah*, *David*,

David, Job, &c. may perswade us hereunto. We see many take great pains night and day, toyl and moyl all the year long, even wearing out their bodies early and late, and yet do not thrive, do not prosper and come forward, but rather go down the wind. The reason is, God doth not bless them and their labours, because they be wicked, and live in the practise of some known sin, and therefore if thou wouldst find God's blessing upon thee and thine, upon thy soul, body, goods and good name, wife, children, corn, cattel, &c. the best way to serve God, is to call on his Name, to lead a godly Life, and then certainly thou shalt find that God will bless thee, and make thee to prosper in all thy undertakings: thou shalt live all thy life comfortably, and on thy sick-bed dye cheerfully, and rest in hope; then rise again at the last day joyfully, and for ever reign with God, and be the Son of the Almighty; and have him always in thy Society; this is the estate of a godly man. And this grant Oh dear Father, for the Son of thy Love, the Lamb of thy bosom, Jesus Christ, *Amen.*

And it is to give us the wisdom because they are not to be drawn hither to think the better of them, or their vile courses, because they flourish a while; or the worse of the godly, because they endure some trouble; but consider their latter end, and in the morning they shall be as chaff, and the wind shall carry them away, for it is a time, like a great chaff, which flares up in Summer, and at the coming of Winter is gone; or at the poor state of the godly, for in the end they shall be exalted.

David's World, to prosper, and to have the blessing of God on our labours, the best way, and the surest way is to become Religious, to walk with God, to lead a godly life; (1 Tim. 4. 8. David. 23. 3. Job. 1. 1. 17. 18. the Example of David, Job, &c.)



David's Blessed Man.

The Fourth Sermon.

VERSE 4

The wicked are not so, but as the Chaff which the wind driveth away.

NOW we have heard the description of a godly man, and of his blessed and happy estate wherein he stands:

Also he proceedeth to a plain description of a wicked and ungodly man. And he sets out his estate by a general speech opposite to that which had been spoken of the godly: *The wicked are not so.* Then by a similitude, comparing him unto Chaff, and then the property of Chaff is noted to be light, vain, and unconstant, carried away with the wind.

In the general Description, or the Introduction to the

the description of a wicked man, *The wicked are not so* : The speech is negative, and excludeth the wicked from all that which the spirit of God had spoken of the godly ; both concerning their vertues themselves, as also concerning the recompence of their vertues.

The vertues of a Godly man were described two wayes : First negatively, *they walk not in the Counsel of the wicked, stand not in the way of sinners, sit not in the seat of the scorers*. Now this negative in the godly, is affirmative in the wicked ; because they walk in the counsel of the wicked, they stand in the way of sinners, and they sit in the seat of the scorers.

The other description of a godly man is affirmative, verse the second, *But his delight is in the Law of the Lord, &c.* But this affirmative in the godly is negative in the wicked ; for their delight is in nothing less, than in the Law of the Lord, neither do, or will the wicked meditate therein either day or night : So that in respect of the vertues of a Godly man, it may well be said, *the wicked are not so*.

And last of all, for the recompence of the vertues of a godly man, the wicked are also excluded : the godly man is compared to a Tree that is planted by the Rivers of water, that brings forth fruit in due season, whose leaf doth never fade, and whatsoever he doth shall prosper. *The wicked are not so, but as the Chaff, &c.*

Where, by the way we may observe the care that God hath, that every man should have his part in that pertaineth to him ; he would not that the wicked should encroach upon the portion of the godly, or that the Saints should be dismayed by the judgments of the wicked, but he laboureth as to allot and allow to one their part, so to exclude the other from their portion, to shew that they have no interest in their blessedness. And so it is a usual thing in the course of the whole Scriptures, (*Psal. 37. 34. Esa. 3. 10, 11.*) that where the Holy Ghost setteth down the blessings and promises pertaining to Christians ; (*Mal. 4. 2.*)

in the same place he setteth down the judgments that belong to the wicked and ungodly.

Dott. 1. Out of the general description, or introduction into the description of a wicked man, in these words, *the wicked are not so*; we gather this Doctrine, that the estate of all wicked men, be they what they may be, never so great, glorious, rich, wise, beautiful, and learned in the world, yet their estate is woful, cursed, miserable, and wretched: he is cursed in his soul, cursed in his body, cursed in his goods, good name, wife, children, corn, cattel, &c. (*Deut. 28. Psal. 119. 2.*) *Thou hast destroyed the proud, and cursed are they that do err from thy Commandments:* (*Psal. 5. 5. Tit. 1. 13. Act. 7. 53. Esay 63.*) *The foolish shall not stand in thy sight, for thou hatest all them that work iniquity.* Now what though a man should abound in wealth, live in honour, booke himself in pleasure, yet if he be not a godly man, that is, truly sanctified, he can take no sound comfort in any of these: (*Prov. 8. 9.*) *For to them that are defiled is nothing pure.* (*Prov. 11. 1.*) but even their prayers are abominable, *He that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, even his Prayers shall be abominable.* And as Solomon saith, *The hope of the wicked shall perish.* But so will be asked, wherein stands their misery and cursed estate? Answer, first in this, that they be out of God's favour, God hates them and all they do; and is not this a misery of all? *Wherin the miseries, to be cursed and miserable wicked are indeed?* to have God our enemy? to have Jesus Christ the Judge our enemy? to have all the Creatures in Heaven and Earth against us? For as those be truly blessed that God loves, and be in his favour; so they must be most cursed and miserable that be out of his favour, whom his soul abhorreth; and such are the wicked; according

ing to that of the Prophet, *The foolish shall not stand in thy sight, for thou hatest all them that work iniquity.*

Secondly, They have no pardon of their sins, and so lye under the curse of God, and in danger of eternal death every day they rise; without repentance there is no pardon: (*Luk. 3. 3.*) But the wicked cannot repent, being hardned in sin, and delight in sin; yea, all their sins stand in account against them, the Lord keeps them in remembrance, and one day he will bring out his book of reckoning, (*Psal. 50. 17, 18.*) *I will reprove thee, and set before thee the things thou hast done.* Oh full little do wicked men think this, that their secret sins in hugger-mugger, in dark corners committed, shall one day come to a reckoning, and they called to a reckoning for the same: and then their own Consciences, will they, nill they, shall cry out and say, *Esa. 57. Righteous is the Lord, and true are his judgments.*

Thirdly, they have no peace of conscience; *There is no peace to the wicked, saith my God,* but a hell in their Consciences, having in them either an accusing Conscience, like Cain, Achitophel, Saul, Judas, and the like; or else a dead and sleepy Conscience, like Nabal, which judgment is no way inferiour to the former: This fearful Judgment of God upon the wicked, is nothing else but a fore-runner of those pains which are prepared for the wicked; and are as it were the smoak of that fire, which after shall torment them.

Fourthly, a wicked man is the heir of vengeance, and the firebrand of hell, and shall as sure be damned, as if he were in hell already, and therefore Christ saith that the wicked is damned already; (*John 3. 18.*) and that five ways; first, in God's Counsel before all Worlds. Secondly, in the Word, wherein their sentence of condemnation is read already. Thirdly, in their own Consciences, which is a fore-runner of the final judgment. Fourthly, by the Judgment be-

gun already upon them, as hardness of heart, blindness of mind, hatred of the light, and the like means of Salvation. Fifthly, by the horrible torment of the soul, which it doth assuredly expect when the full vial of Gods wrath shall be poured upon it. Oh miserable and unhappy condition ! wo worth the time, may such say, that ever they were born.

Who is a wicked man ? Answer, *A wicked man* (in general) he that lives and lies in *described.* sin without repentance. But such a man is a wicked man, as *doth walk in the counsel of the wicked, that doth stand in the way of sinners, that doth sit in the seat of the corners.* For as he is a godly man that labours to shun and avoid the bad Counsel and lewd company of wicked and ungodly men : so is he a wicked man that loves and likes their bad counsel and lewd company. And as a noble man's servant is known by his Livery ; so we may certainly judge of them by their company, a good man loves good company, a godly man makes much of them that fear the Lord, (*Psal. 16. 3.*) *My eyes (saith David) shall be upon the faithful in the Land.* This we may see in *Jacob, (Gen. 37. 2.)* who loved *Joseph* above all his brethren, because he had grace in him : *All my delight is upon the Saints (Psal. 101. 6. 7.)* But wicked men are like birds of a feather which fly together, and like will to like. So that if you would ask a certain Rule how to judge of men, whether they be good or bad, godly or wicked, I know not any rule more sure for a mans outward life, to judge of him than by his company : And therefore as *St. John* makes it a mark of Gods child, and a certain sign of the love of God to us, (*1 Job. 3. 14.*) *If we love the brethren ;* so on the other side it is a fearful note of a wicked man, when he hath no delight in the company of Gods children and faithful Servants, (*Ps. 50. 17, 18.*) but delights only in the company of the wicked and ungodly.

Use 1. Let all wicked men lay this Doctrine to heart, and be affected with it; and let me say to them, as David said unto the godly; (Psal. 50. 16.) Unto the ungodly saith God, what hast thou to do to take my Covenant in thy mouth, seeing thou hatest to be reformed, and hast cast my words behind thee? When thou sawest a thief, thou consentedst unto him; and hast been partaker with the adulterer, &c. These things hast thou done, and I held my peace, and thou thoughtest that I was like thee. But I will reprove thee, and set before thee the things thou hast done. Oh consider this, ye that forget God, lest I tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver you. Oh! that the wicked and ungodly of the world would consider in what cursed state they stand in, what extreme danger to lose their own souls, clean out of Gods favour, so as he hates and abhors them, and all they do. Now as Solomon saith, if the wrath of the King be as the roaring of a Lyon, how much more the wrath of Eternal God, who is able not only to kill the body, but to cast both soul and body for ever into Hell-fire? Ah then be admonished, say you had a fair warning, repent in time, live no longer in sin, turn to God with all speed; while it is called to day: Say with David, Away from ye my wicked, I will keep the Commandments of my God. And this remember, that as bad company, and the society of wicked men is a fearful sign of a wicked man, so it is most dangerous; for sin is a spiritual plague of Leprosie, it is of a spreading and contagious nature; (Prov. 6.) Can a man touch pitch, and not be defiled? Then may a man keep Company with the wicked, and not be corrupted; (Gen. 41. 15, 16.) Joseph living in the Court of Pharaoh, how soon had he learned to swear by the life of Pharaoh: besides we shall be compelled to wink at the sins of those whom we love, and so by consenting to them, are guilty of them. Again, (2 Pet. 2. 8. Pl. 12. 5.) we cannot but be vexed with them, and grieved at the heart, as Lot was; yea, and

in danger to be plunged with them ; as *Lot* in *Sodom* was taken Prisoner, and all his household : And therefore as a man doth shun a house infected, so let us shun such company, as most dangerous, pernicious, and hurtful.

use 1. And here we are to wonder at the palpable blindness of wicked men, at their blockishness and senceless security, that though their estate be as we have heard out of the word of God, and testimonies of Holy Scriptures, so cursed, miserable, wretched, and damnable ; yet they see it not, they fear it not, they believe it not ; they fear no danger, they desire no remedy, their minds and hearts are so blinded through self-love, and so hardened in all kind of sin and iniquity, that nothing can move them and do them good. They be like the *Strichs Dog*, no stroaks, no sparks can awake them. Of all Diseases they be most dangerous, that be least felt : As the *Apoplexy*, *dead Palsie*, *Lethargy*, &c. So, when a man is sick, even soul-sick, and sick unto death, and feelth no pain, his case must needs be dangerous. Many men complain of the *Stone* in the kidney, and ride, and run night and day to find ease for it, but few complain of the stone in the heart ; Men have hard, stony, and flinty hearts, and neither love of Heaven, nor fear of Hell, neither mercy nor judgment can move them, or make them to repent. Well, to conclude this point, let men take their courses ; run on in sin, *Walk in the counsel of the wicked, stand in the way of sinners, and sit in the seat of the scornful* : Let them refuse the counsel and company of Gods Servants ; and when they have done all that they can, they are but carthes ; and the time will come, that they will curse the time that ever they were born, and say, wo worth the time they kept bad company : (*Wisd. 5. Rev. 6. 12*) *Oh what fools and mad men were we !* When they shall wish the heavens to fall upon them, and the rocks to crush them in pieces for fear and anger of God.

And

And thus much for the general description of a wicked man in these words, *The wicked are not so.*

But as the Chaff which the wind driveth away.

THE Prophet *David* having shewed the difference betwixt the godly and the wicked by a general Introduction, *It is not so*; cometh now to set out their estate by a similitude and comparison, where he compares the wicked to *Chaffe*: and it is all one as if he should say, the wicked and ungodly man is not like a Tree well planted and watered, that bears good fruit, and alwayes flourisheth, but like unto Chaff, which hath no root at all in the Earth, no juice, nor sap, but wants all kind of good fruit and greenness, so as it is easily scattered and dispersed with every blast of wind: even so the wicked are not rooted nor grafted into Jesus Christ, and are altogether void and destitute of all fruit of good works, and of all saving grace, have no juice nor sap of goodness in them, and in time of trouble and temptation, they fall away, yea, every blast of false Doctrine, every storm of temptation, tryal, or persecution, yea, the least blast of Gods anger driveth them hither and thither, they know not which way to turn them.

So that in the similitude or comparison there are two things to be considered of us.

First, the matter whereunto the wicked are compared to *Chaff*.

Secondly, The condition of *Chaff*, which the wind driveth away.

In the former of these we are to consider how the wicked resemble *Chaff* naturally and accidentally.

Naturally, *Chaff* is light and unprofitable.

First, It is light, containing in it no solid and weighty matter, but a very slight and frothy substance, subject to many alterations; even so the wicked are not solid in their purposes and enterprises,

and

and weighty in their carriage and courses; but as *Chaff*, light, easily tossed and blown away.

It may appear unto us that the wicked are as *Chaff*, (*Ec.* 12. 26.) light, because they be light of their words, they have not their mouth in their heart like a wise man, but they have their heart in their mouth, like a fool. Do they promise any thing? their words are as wind, as the Proverb is. Do they vow any thing? they keep their vows like those that vowed *Pauls* death. Do they swear any thing? they are but as Bells and bubbles in the water broken in a moment of time: So that the wicked in respect of their words, vows, or oaths, may well be compared to *Chaff*, light.

Again, the wicked may well be compared to *Chaff*, light; because they are light in their minds, entertaining and excluding, one while admitting, another while rejecting, infinite purposes and thoughts of heart. Again, they are light of their bodies, by committing many fornications. Yea, let their vertues be compared with their vices, it will then appear, *that they are lighter than vanity it self.*

Secondly, As the wicked are like *Chaff*, light, so are they unprofitable, and that two ways: First, in matters temporal concerning this life, wherein though they have ability, as they have for the most part, yet they want will to do good with the same. Secondly, in matters spiritual, wherein though they have a will, which is a rare thing to be found in the wicked, yet they want ability.

First, the wicked are as *Chaff*, unprofitable, in regard of matters temporal: For, *who doth regard the afflictions of Joseph?* For either their will is wholly bent upon covetousness, or prodigality. This is an evil which the Preacher saw under the Sun, (*Ec.* 6. 2.) *A man to whom God hath given riches and treasures, and honours, and he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, but God giveth him no power to eat thereof, but a strange man shall eat it up.*

Yea, such is the case of many a man, that where he locks up his riches from others with one lock, he locks them up from himself with a thousand, or else they spend them prodigally, like the rich glutton, who fared of the best, and went of the finest, but had nothing to bestow on poor *Lazarus*. (*Luke 16.*) whereas indeed they are but Stewards of those things they enjoy, and must one day give an account for them: And if they be found in the day of their account to have been unprofitable, as Chaff is unprofitable, then must they assuredly expect no other sentence, than that which was denounced against that unprofitable servant: (*Mat. 25. 30.*) *Cast that unprofitable servant into utter darkness.*

Secondly, The wicked may be said to be as Chaff, unprofitable, in respect of matters spiritual; because though they have therein a will, yet want they ability, whereby they might benefit others; (*Job. 3. 6.*) *For whosoever is born of the flesh, is flesh*, and nothing but flesh. How then can a man give that to another he hath not himself? Or speak that to others, he is ignorant of himself? Yea, if this mans father, or mother, wife, or child lay a dying, and one short prayer might save their souls, a wicked man is not able to perform that Christian duty for them: *For he that turneth away his ear from hearing the Law, even his prayer shall be abominable.* (*Prov. 28. 9.*) So that howsoever a wicked man may seem to pray, or the like, yet by reason he is unregenerate, not born anew, and they that proceed not from faith, and a heart purified from sin, the Lord doth turn the same into sin unto him. So that a wicked man at his best, in matters Temporal or Eternal, he is as Chaff, light and unprofitable.

A state of the wicked exceeding changeable.

Dott. 2. In that the Spirit of God compares all wicked men to chaff, we learn, that the estate and condition of wicked Men is exceeding unconstant, vain, uncertain, mutable,

table and changeable, they have no certain stay, no sure and settled estate in this world: whether we consider the matters of Religion, and Gods worship, or the things of the world, we shall see them like unto chaff, vain, vile, uncertain, and mutable.

First, In matters of Religion, for the worship and service of God, how vain and mutable the wicked are, the Example of Judas doth demonstrate, (*Mat. 27.*) who being chosen to be one of the twelve, fell away afterward, dangerously and treacherously: the like may be said of Demas, (*1 Tim. 1. 20.*) who made a glorious flourish for the time, and yet afterwards he fell in love with the World: And the like may be said of Hymeneus, Philetus, and Alexander, (*2 Tim. 2. 17.*) who were counted famous, and esteemed as Pillars of the Church, yet they fell to renounce everlasting Salvation. To this purpose doth St. John describe the estate of the backsliders in his time; (*1 Joh. 2. 19.*) *They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us.* Hereunto cometh that parable propounded by our Saviour Christ. (*Mat. 21. 28.*) *A certain man had two Sons, and came to the eldest and said, Son, go and work to day in my Vine-yard: But he answered and said, I will not: yet afterwards he repented himself, and went: then came he to the second, and said likewise: and he answered, and said, I will Sir, and went not: he seemed forward, but hung back; he promised much, but performed nothing at all. The like may be said of the young man which came to our Saviour Christ, and said, *Good Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have Eternal Life?* yet when he was tryed and examined, he went away sorrowful.*

Again, for their worldly estate, all their felicity and great Pomp is but a dream, it is but as Chaff, the least blast of Gods wrath will overthrow all their happiness and prosperity; which at the best, is most uncertain and very mutable; look upon Pharaoh,

Saul, Achitophel, Absalom, Nebuchadnezzar, Nabal, and the Rich fool. (Job 21. 18.) Job setting out the estate of the wicked, concludeth thus; They spend their days in pleasures, and suddenly go down to Hell; and there sheweth the cause; their prosperity (alas) is not in their own hand. (Psal. 7.) But the Lord doth make them as stubble before the wind, and as chaff shall they be dispersed. And David speaking of the prosperity of the wicked, sheweth withal, how slippery and uncertain it is, that in a very moment they be gone, and like chaff are scattered abroad: So that it doth appear that the estate of the wicked man is too fickle and uncertain, and is therefore well compared unto chaff.

And by this comparison is shewed, that the wicked be most unlike to the godly, and therefore he compares them not to any tree, no not to a dead and withered tree, but to chaff.

First, because as the godly man is rooted into Christ Jesus, and receiveth nourishment from him, good juyce, and good sap, *the wicked are not so*; but void of all juyce and sap, dry as dust or chaff.

Secondly, whereas the godly man is fruitful, *the wicked are not so but as chaff*, unfruitful.

Thirdly, whereas the godly man is permanent, and his estate durable, neither wind nor weather can shake him, being rooted and grounded in Christ, *the wicked are not so, but as chaff*, even variable as the wind; every blast of false Doctrine, every wind of temptation, and every tryal for the Gospels sake will blow them clean away.

Use 1. Let this admonish wicked men to look about them: Thine estate is not so good as thou thinkest it is; although thou be rich, in honour, and in great preferment, thou seemest all this while to be like a great Oak, or tall Cedar-tree, but know thou art nothing less in the sight of God: Thou art like unto Chaff, light, vain, loose, vile, unprofitable, and variable; no firmness and constancy at all in thee: yea, and

and mark what will follow, and be the end, unless thou repent and turn unto God ; *He will come whose Fan is in his hand, and he will gather the wheat into his garner ; but the Chaff will be burn with unquenchable fire, Mat. 3. 12.* Oh that all wicked men would now examine themselves, how they are in the barn-floor of the Lord Jesus, whether as Chaff or Corn, for a day of winnowing will assuredly approach, wherein the Lord will then gather his good corn into his Garner, but then the Chaff will be cast out to be burned with fire unquenchable. We must all of us pass under Gods Fan, great, small, rich, poor, learned, ignorant, Minister and People ; and then, if thou shalt be found to be chaff, to the fire thou must forthwith go. And therefore let all Gods Children take heed, that they do not fashion themselves like unto the wicked ; for as our ends are most unlike, even so our lives must be unlike, they live in sin after the fashion of the world, we must frame our lives after the word,

Use 2. Secondly, let all Gods children learn to judge aright of the estate of all wicked men, they flourish indeed in the World, and who but they, free from trouble, full of prosperity : Whereas the godly man is troubled and afflicted, (*Psal 37.*) yea, often in great misery and disgrace of the World : and this is the thing that oftentimes doth trouble the godly : But if we will judge of them not by the eye of the body, but of the soul, according to Gods Word, we shall see we shall have no great cause to wonder at them, much less to be grieved for them : Alas, poor souls, when they be at the best, they be but as chaff, vain, light, vile, and unconstant ; *I saw (saith David) the ungodly spreading himself like a green Bay-tree, so I looked on him, and passed by him, and loe he was gone, I sought him, but he could no where be found.*

Hitherto hath appeared what chaff is, and that the wicked are like the chaff naturally considered ;

Now in a word, we are to consider how the wicked resemble chaff accidentally, and that two wayes.

First, chaff is preserved for a time, while it is in the field with the good Corn, least both of them should perish together. (*Mat. 13. 19.*) This appeareth in the Gospel to be the care which God had, not to suffer the Tares to be plucked up for a time, lest they should pluck up the good wheat with them: Even so the wicked are spared for a time for the godlies sake, which otherwise could not live: Even as the Tares amongst the Wheat were spared for the Wheat's sake.

And surely this might admonish all wicked and ungodly sinners to repent, and (in time) to turn unto God, and to esteem better of the company of Gods faithful Servants and Children here in this World, to make much of them, for they fare the better for them every day they rise, they enjoy all they have for their sakes, else God would soon make an end of them upon Earth. If *Noah* and his Family were in the Ark, the flood would soon drown the rest. If *Lot* were out of *Sodom*, it would soon rain down fire and brimstone from Heaven upon the *Sodomites*. And therefore Gods children may well be compared to a piece of cork cast into the Sea full of nails, which bears up the nails which otherwise would sink to the bottom one by one; even so the wicked are preserved for a time for the godlies sake.

But if they will still proceed to hate them above all things in the world; well, the time will come, when they shall think it the greatest misery in the world, to be severed and sundered from the company and society of the godly. But of this hereafter.

The other condition of chaff accidentally considered, it is the sifting, or the separating the same from the good corn, which shall be in the harvest of Gods general Judgment: (*Mat. 3. 30.*) For there be but two sorts of men, namely, the Sheep and the Goats, the godly and the bad, the elect, and the reprobate.

and these do live together here, even as the Tares amongst the good Wheat. But in the harvest of Gods general judgment they are separated, even as a Shepherd doth divide his sheep from his goats.

Thus much for the first part of the similitude, where the wicked are compared to Chaff: Now cometh to be considered the condition of chaff.

Which the Wind scattereth away.

BY *Wind* (in this place) we are to understand the Judgments of God, which in the Holy Scriptures is expressed by sundry things; as by fire and sword, arrows, sickle, and fan &c. And in this same place by wind, (*Mat. 7. 25.*) *The Wind blew upon the House, &c.*

Now the Judgments of God do resemble the wind in two things especially. First, It hath a bound from whence it cometh, viz. Heaven: Secondly, it hath a bound to which it goeth, viz. Earth.

Then the first consideration, in the which the judgments of God are compared to the wind, is the place they come from: *Terminus a quo.* The wind it cometh from above, even out of the Almighty's treasure house; According to that of the Prophet David, (*Psal. 135. 7.*) *He bringeth the winds out of his treasury:* so that by what means soever the judgments of God are executed upon us, or in what kind soever, certainly they come from God as the Wind doth.

The second is the place it cometh unto, even the Center of the Earth we dwell on:

Such an one was that wind that came and beat upon the Banqueting-house *Terminus ad quem.*

of Job's Children, (*Job 1. 19.*) And what shall I say of the Judgments of God, which came so swiftly, even as the wind upon Pharaoh, Saul, Abab, Ananias, Herod, and the like; whose destru-

ations came suddenly from Heaven, as the wind upon them? And as the wind is invisible to the eye; even so come the judgments of God upon the wicked, when they are most secure; Yea, when the wicked shall say, *Peace, Peace*, then shall destruction come upon them suddenly, as the wind, yea, and as the wind is most violent where it is most oppugned, as by the tallest trees, and the highest hills; so where the heart of man is lofty, he is so much the more open to the winds of Gods judgments, as we see in *Pharaoh, Herod, Simon Magus, &c.*

Now in that the Prophet hath compared the wicked to Chaff, and the judgments of God to the Wind; We learn from hence the irrevocableness of the destruction of the wicked: Alas, what is Chaff to stand against the wind? And what is flesh and blood to resist the Almighty? This the Prophet David shews most excellently, who speaking of the Enemies of Christ Jesus and of the certainty of their destruction, saith, (*Psal. 29.*) *Thou shalt bruise them with a rod of iron, and break them in pieces like a Potters Vessel*, against a bar of Iron, or a Head of Brass; How did the wind of Gods judgments pursue Cain, (*Gen. 4.*) when he had slain his innocent brother? *Pharaoh* seemed a mighty man, yet he proved but Chaff when the wind of Gods judgments did blow upon him. (*Act. 12. 23. 2 Thes. 6. 7. Psal. 136. 15.*) *Herod* thought himself to be some petty God, at what time he made his Oration to the people, but he was less than man when the wind came even the judgments of God, *that he was eaten up with Worms.*

Use 1. Hence we learn, that the power of God is infinite and absolute; all power is of God, *He doth bring down the mighty from their seat.* Yea, he hath all Creatures at a beck, and at a call, to humble man; yea, and the least of all Creatures, when it is armed and sent of God, is sufficient to destroy the wicked, as Frogs, Lice, Flies, and the like creatures

tures did Pharaoh and the Egyptians, (Exod. 10.) and as the Palmer-worm, and the like kind of Caterpillars did the men of Judah and Israel : (Joel 1. 3. 4.) and therefore this must needs be a terror unto the wicked, who are no stronger than the Chaff, to resist the wind of Gods judgments. This may teach them humility, and pull down the haughtiness of their hearts, when they shall hear the irrevocableness of their destruction.

- Use 2. Seeing the destruction of the wicked is irrevocable, and that the judgments of God come suddenly ; we are taught hereby, that it is our duty to awake out of sin, and to be watchful over our own souls. We must not sleep in sin, neither give our selves to security, but be careful and circumspect, that we be not suddenly overtaken ; this is that charge which our Saviour giveth : (Mat. 24.) *Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour in which the Son of man will come.* The judgments of God are threatned to come upon thee suddenly, as the Wind : thou knowest not whether thou shalt have an hour, or a moment of time given thee to repent, thou maist be smitten with sudden Death, when thou risest out of thy bed, thou knowest not whether thou shalt lye down again : When thou lyeest down upon thy bed, thou knowest not what may happen unto thee ere it be day. (Prov. 27. 1.) *Boast not of to morrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth.* And therefore while it is to day, let us repent, and labour to be reconciled to God in Christ, that when his judgments shall come as the wind, suddenly the destroyer may pass over us, and we remain safe under the shadow of the Almighty.

Hitherto hath the Prophet described the woful estate and condition of the Wicked here in this life. Now in the next verse, by way of prophesie or threatning, he sets out their estate and condition in the life to come, which state and condition, the Lord

of his infinite mercy keep us from falling into, which we are too subject unto by our corrupt nature and sinful life : And we beseech thee that thou wilt put away from us all hurtful things, which are the causes of thy wrath and indignation, and to give us those things which be more profitable for us, and chiefly thy mercy and pittie, that so we running to thy promises, may be made partakers of thy Heavenly Treasure, through Jesus Christ our Lord and only Saviour, Amen.

David's

David's *Bleſſed Man.*

The Fifth Sermon.

Verſe 5.

*Therefore the wicked ſhall not be able to ſtand
in judgment, nor ſinners in the aſſembly of
the Righteous.*

Here the Prophet deſcribes the wicked and ungodly man by his fearful end, and that which ſhall befall him hereafter, and that he draweth into two phraſes of ſpeech : Firſt, *They ſhall not ſtand in judgment* : Secondly, *They ſhall not be aſſociates with the juſt*. So that we ſee, that howſoever now the wicked bear it out, and ſeem to be the only men in the world, yet in the great day of the Lord, when we muſt all appear before his Bar, that will judge juſtly without reſpect of perſons ; then theſe wretched men ſhall not be able to ſtand, that is, to endure the ſentence of the Judge, and

and his angry countenance; but shall receive the fearful doom of Eternal death. *Depart from me ye cursed, &c.*

Well then, by this we learn that there shall be a judgment, wherein men must stand to appear before God, to give account of their works; and this we acknowledge in that Article of our Faith, when we say, *We believe that he shall come to judge both the quick and the dead.* Behold (saith the Lord) *the day cometh that shall burn as an Oven, and all the proud, and all the wicked shall be as stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up.* And our Saviour alluding to that day saith, (*Mat. 25. 41.*) *Then will I say to them on my left hand, &c.* Again, (*Acts 17. 31. 2 Cor. 5. 2 Thess. 1. 7, 8, 9.*) *He hath appointed a day in the which he will judge the world in righteousness.* Now if there were no more places in Scripture, but this Text, it might suffice to prove that there shall be a day of Judgment. But besides these Testimonies, there be certain Reasons that prove the same, taken from the nature of God, and his principal Attributes, his Mercy and Justice, which we must needs confess he is most true in both; he is most merciful and most just in all his ways.

And therefore having promised it shall go well with his Children, that they shall be happy and blessed, and that the wicked shall be miserable and cursed, in these two respects it must needs be, that there must be a day of Judgment; for in this world who endure more misery, grief, and wrong, than Gods children, who are contemned, mocked, mis-used, and by all means abused by wicked men? They are in want, sickness, persecution, in poverty, (*Luk 16.*) and a thousand miseries besides. But the wicked flourish, live in wealth and ease, and all things that heart can wish. Now then, seeing this is the estate of Gods Children in this World, full of troubles and miseries, and the wicked live at ease, according to their lusts: It must needs follow, that there must be a day of
judg-

judgment, when God shall shew his mercy in blessing and crowning the vertues of his children, and likewise in executing Justice upon the wicked.

Use 1. Oh that men and women could often think of this time, of the last day of Judgment ! Oh that we could bestow that time which we bestow upon our pleasures and foolish sports, to meditate on this day ! Oh that men would bestow that time which they bestow on unprofitable, if not sinful exercises ; as carding, dicing, decking , and painting those Carcasses of theirs ! O (I say) happy were we, if we could bestow this time in thinking on his judgment , what shall then become of us evermore.

There is no man so wretched and desperate , but he can wish with *Balaam*, *Oh that I might dye the death of the righteous, and that my last end might be like one of theirs !* Labour now then in time to become a new Creature, walk with God in obedience , labour for sanctification, and this will cause thee to stand out in that judgment day.

Now that the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, some may here object and say, This is that which we desire, that we may not appear before the face of that angry Judge, whose presence is so intolerable.

But alas, this is not all ; for then the wicked may seem to be blessed, if they might here delight in sin , and drink down iniquity like water, and never be called to account for the same. Therefore the wicked shall appear in judgment ; and yet not any whit contrary to this Text, which saith, *The wicked shall not stand in judgment*, and that in these four respects.

First, In regard of their appearance, *The Lord will enter into judgment with all flesh* : if with all flesh, then chiefly with such kind of flesh as are *species of genus* : So flesh, as that they are nothing but flesh, that have not the seed of the Spirit remaining in them.

Secondly,

Secondly, They must arise, and appear in this Judgment, in respect of sinners arraignment at Gods Judgment bar. For we must not only appear in judgment, but *before the Judgment seat of Christ.*

Thirdly, They must rise and appear in this Judgment to be indited; for God will bring *every work of theirs into judgment, whether it be good or evil.*

Fourthly, and lastly, They must arise and stand in this Judgment, to hear the sentence of the Judge of Heaven and Earth pass against them, *Depart from me ye cursed into Everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil, and his Angels:* A thundring sentence indeed, able (if it were possible) to wound to death the hearts of the wicked, but they shall after death never dye, Yea, every word of the sentence seems to be most fearful and terrible.

First, What they shall do; *Depart.*

Secondly, How they shall depart; *Cursed.*

Thirdly, From whom? *From me.*

Fourthly, Whither, *Into fire.*

Fifthly, Into what fire? *Everlasting fire.*

Sixthly, By what right? *Prepared.*

Seventhly, With what company? *The Devil and his Angels.*

Hitherto, And thus far, the wicked must arise, and stand in judgment; but after this sentence is once given, they shall never rise up to appear in judgment any more. But where it is said, *They shall not stand in judgment,* this is meant only in respect of Gods favour: for this is proper only to the godly, thus to stand in judgment, who are bold in respect of Jesus Christ their elder Brother: in whose Righteousness they appear.

Use 1. Oh that men would consider this, high, low, rich, poor, noble, and simple, *That no wicked man shall stand in judgment,* but shall hear the fearful sentence of Eternal vengeance, *Depart from me ye cursed.* Oh how ready are men to put from them this

this day of reckoning ! They ſeem to have made a league with death, and to be at an agreement with the grave. But the Lord will diſanul this their agreement, (*Eſay.* 28. 14.) and the time will come when theſe wicked wretches will be glad to put their heads in an auger-hole, when they ſhall cry unto the rocks and hills to fall upon them, to hide them, and cover them from the wrath of God the angry Judge, whom they are not able to endure. Who would buy gold at ſuch a rate, or pleaſures ſo dear, to loſe his ſoul in Hell-fire for ever, for the pleaſures of ſin for a ſeaſon here.

Uſe 2. Secondly, We are taught here, that as all wicked and ungodly men be wretched and miſerable in their life, ſo at the day of Judgment their eſtate is much more fearful : for it is ſaid here, *They ſhall not ſtand in Judgment*, but ſhall quake and tremble, as not being able to endure the angry countenance of the Judge : (*Rev.* 20. 13.) For now they ſhall ſee the Books brought forth, and their ſins laid open. O good Lord, what ſhall ungodly men do then ? Which way ſhall they turn them when they ſhall ſee the Judge ſtand above them, with a naked ſword to cut them off, and the Devils ready to execute Gods Eternal Judgments on them : poor ſouls, what ſhall become of them ? How can they ſtand ? How can they endure it ? and yet they muſt undergo it, and endure it.

But more than this, they muſt receive that fearful ſentence of Eternal vengeance, *Depart from me ye curſed, &c.* So as now they muſt remain in perpetual priſon, in the dark dungeon of Hell for ever, where the pains are endleſs, eaſeleſs, and remedileſs : They ſhall have no eaſe, no, not one drop of water to cool their tongue : And this word *everlaſting torment*, doth even kill the heart of the damned ; for if a man lye in hell-torments ſo many thouſand years as there be
ſtars

stars in the Firmament, or Sand on the Sea-shore :
(Esay. 30. 30.) It were some comfort to a damned
 soul, that once there might be an end thereof. But
 alas, when he hath suffered torments so many years,
 the number to suffer still will ever remain infinite.
 God give us Grace that we may become righteous, that
 we may stand in judgment.

The second part of the misery of a wicked man in
 the life to come is :

*He shall not stand in the Assembly of the
 Just.*

IN these words is noted out unto us a second branch,
 of the judgment of the wicked in the life to come :
 That they shall be severed and secluded from the com-
 pany of the just.

Heaven is called the *New Jerusalem*, wherein enters
 no unclean thing : This is the place where the just
 only do abide : Here are all the Holy Patriarchs, *Abra-
 ham, Isaac, and Jacob*, here are the Apostles, here
 are the godly Martyrs, and constant witnesses of
 Christs truth ; here are all the Saints that sleep in
 Christ, here they rest and sing continually, *Praise,
 honour, and glory unto him that sitteth upon the Throne* :
 they enjoy the presence of God, and see his face con-
 tinually. Now to be deprived of this place, and to
 be severed from this company, it is misery with a wit-
 ness, and this is that misery here pointed out in the
 second place, *They shall not stand in the Assembly of
 the just.*

The Church is to be understood two ways, *Mili-
 tant and Triumphant*, and from both of these the
 wicked are excluded : for howsoever the wicked be
 amongst the godly, as Tares amongst the good wheat,
 as *Cain and Esau*, and *Judas* did amongst the godly :
 yet they were not of the godly, *they went out from us,
 because they were not of us* : But this is not directly in-
 tended

tended in this place, but of the Church *Triumphant* in the Kingdom of Heaven, where the godly enjoy Jesus Christ, (*Psal. 16. 11.*) *In whose presence is the fulness of joy, and at whose right hand is pleasure for evermore :* here the wicked shall not stand in the Assembly. If Adam for one sin was driven out of Paradise, O Lord what shall a poor sinner expect, that hath a world of sins ? (*Exod. 3.*) And if *Moses* might not be suffered to stand upon the holy ground, before he had put off his shoes, Oh ! how much less shall sinful wretches stand in the presence of the ever-living God, having on the shoes of their sinful affections ? Yea, it is just with God, that such should be shut from Heaven, the *Church-Triumphant*, seeing they never warred in the *Church-Militant*.

Neither the sinners in the Assembly of the Just.

HERE then we learn, that there are two sorts of men in the world ? good and bad ; sheep, and goats ; Elect and Reprobate : And here in this world they live together, but after death, in the last judgment, there shall be two places appointed for them, one on the right hand, another on the left ; one in honour, the other in shame ; one in joy and comfort, (*Mat. 25. 34.*) the other in fear and horror. And as wicked men in this life could never abide the company and society of the godly, but did mock and scoff at them, and shun their company as much as they could : so in the great day of account, at the general separation, *The sinners shall not appear in the Assembly of the Righteous*, but shall be severed and sundred by the great Shepherd of the Sheep, the Judge of the World.

Now that wicked men shun and avoid the company of the godly, and do desire and seek the company of the wicked, it is plain by experience, and there-

therefore it is just with God, that at the last day they shall be severed, and secluded their company, and as they loved and delighted in the company of wicked men, and such as have no fear of God before their eyes; so now they shall have their belly full of their company. How did *Cain* hate *Abel*? *Pharaoh*, *Moses*, and *Aaron*? *Saul*, *David*? The *Jews*, our Saviour *Christ*? *Elimas* the company of *Paul*? And on the contrary part, (*Psal.* 50.) how one wicked man doth love the company of another like himself. Common experience doth prove it.

And here wicked men be noysom and troublesom to the godly, as goats to sheep; (*Ezek.* 4.) They tread down their pasture, they trample in their water, and they push them with their horns; Christs sheep now sustain sundry wrongs and injuries, and are much annoyed and vexed by those stinking and unruly goats: (*Mal.* 3. 18.) But there will come a day of separation, to the horreur of the wicked, and comfort of the godly.

Further, In these words we may consider the estate of the Righteous at the last judgment: that is of the elect of God, such as have truly repented of their sins, by faith believe and embrace Jesus Christ, and are justified through his obedience in the sight of God; surely their estate shall be blessed and happy, and so great, that the very wicked shall be much ashamed and astonished to behold the same.

First, *They shall be set on Christs right hand*, which is no small honour and joy for poor silly souls to be advanced to sit on the right hand of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and the great judge of the World.

Secondly, *They shall hear the blessed sentence, Come ye blessed, &c.* (*Mat.* 25.)

Thirdly, *They shall be put in real possession of Eternal Salvation in the Kingdom of Heaven*, and live in the blessed presence of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the Elect Angels and blessed Saints, where there shall be no sorrow, pain, sickness, &c.

Rev.

(Rev. 2. 21. and 13, 14.) *Blessed are the dead that dye in the Loyd, for they rest from their labours:* So then after death they have a sweet *quittus est*, and a general discharge and freedom from all Enemies of soul and body, from all trouble, pain, and grief. Whereas the wicked and ungodly shall be in a clean contrary state and condicion: for they shall not come into the company of the righteous, nor shall have no part in that place of their comfort, honour, joy, and dignity; but shall be set on Christs left hand, a place of exceeding sorrow, and grief, shame, and confusion, horror and trembling.

This might admonish all wicked and ungodly sinners to repent in time, to turn to God by true repentance, and amendment of their lives, to esteem better of the Company of Gods faithful Servants, and righteous Children in this world, and to make much of them. But if they will still proceed to hate them, to set themselves against the godly, to shun their company, and to hate them above all the things in the World: Well, yet remember the time will come, that ye shall think it the greatest misery in the World; that ye shall be severed and sundred from their company, and in so being, shall be severed and sundred from the company of Jesus Christ himself, of God the Father, and all the blessed Saints and Angels of God in Heaven, (*Wisd. 5. 1, 2, 3, 4.*) *Then shall the Righteous stand in great boldness before him that persecuted him, &c.* Thus ye see the madness and extreame folly of wicked men, they hate them whom they ought most to love, and love them whom they ought most to dislike and shun.

Let men take heed with whom they joyn themselves in society: seeing with whom they keep company in this Life, in Death they shall partake with them, and after at the last judgment shall be joyned with them in Hell-fire for ever. He that now is familiar, and a companion of Reprobates and ungodly men, as Atheists, Papists, Swearers, Drunkards,

Scor-

Scorners, &c. certainly in death he shall be punished with them, and after death have his abiding with them forever. (*Rev.* 18. 4.) So he that is now a companion with all those that fear God, surely, he shall have a part with them in death, and at the last judgment shall be placed with them in joy and eternal happiness, which shall never have an end in the highest heavens.

It is thought to be a matter of little or no moment, what company a man keeps, to live amongst Swaggerers, Swearers, Drunkards, Atheists, &c. but the truth is, it is a fearful sign of a Reprobate, and he that is now a companion with them in their sins, shall after death take part with them in their plagues in Hell, with the Devil and his Angels, where the fire is unquenchable, the torment insupportable, hopeless, helpless, easeless, and endless: It is a fire which never wasteth, but it maketh the torment and the pain of the wicked and ungodly sinners perpetual: There the Glutton shall be fed with hunger and thirst, the Drunkard quaff bowls of burning brimstone; the sluggard and the idle person, shall be pricked forward with flaming and red hot forks of Iron, the lustful shall embrace snakes and ugly serpents; and the proud shall be apparelled with shame and confusion: The Usurer and Extortioner shall have Gold and Silver poured down their throats scalding hot, and this shall be the portion of all those wicked and ungodly sinners, who have delighted more in following their own vain imaginations, than the Rule of God's Law: *Solomon* who was the wisest King upon the Earth, he saw and understood what the best things of this World could afford; all but sorrow and grief: for saith he, Vanity of Vanities, all in this World and Life is but Vanity. O who would then for a little pleasure of sin, for a little laughter and merriness of heart, venture and hazard the loss of his Soul and Body, which cost so much, and so great a price as the blood of Jesus Christ, for a small time of de-

delight, which is so momentary, so fickle, so unconstant, and so dangerous? O what would not a sinner give for one day of Repentance, when he shall behold the great Judge calling every man to an account for his Life, how he hath spent it, and made use of the Talent the Lord lent him; then can he give no account but of his sins and misdeeds; and then he must expect that fearful sentence, *Go ye cursed into Everlasting fire, &c.* Where Hell is open beneath thee, the furnace burning beside thee, the Devils attending on thee, and to aggravate thy misery the more, Satan and his adherents shall heap up a measure of unmeasurable Torments upon thee for ever. From which place of perdition good God deliver us, for the Son of thy Love, Jesus Christ, *Amen.*

David's

David's Blessed Man.

The Sixth Sermon.

Verse 6.

For the Lord knoweth the way of the Righteous; but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

Hitherto the Prophet hath described the wonderful blessed estate of a Godly man: As also the fearful and cursed estate of the wicked; Now in the sixth verse, which contains in it the second general part of the Psalm, is laid down a reason both of the happiness of the one, and also of the misery of the other.

The godly man is a blessed man; Why? Because the Lord knoweth, that is, approveth of the way of a Righteous and Godly man, he likes it, and directs it, yea, takes care of it, and doth bless the way, that is the Life and Conversation, the Actions, Studies, and endeavours of the Righteous.

Secondly, The wicked are cursed and miserable. Why? Because the Lord doth not thus know, that is, the Lord doth not like nor allow of a wicked man, he doth not love nor approve of his Life nor dealings, but rather dislikes him, and all he doth; yea, he hates and abhors his vile, abominable, and wicked life: And therefore both he and his wayes, that is, his Studies, Labours, and Enterprises shall perish, and come to destruction.

Doct. 1. In that the Lord is said, *To know the way of the Righteous*, that is, to like it, to love it, and to be well pleased with it, so as he will direct and bless it; Here is matter of exceeding comfort to every poor child of God, to every godly and righteous servant of God, that being justified by faith in Christ Jesus, and sanctified by the Holy Ghost, live well, and lead a Godly and Righteous Life, that howsoever the world contemns them, scoffs and scorns them, mocks and mowes at them, reviles and rails upon them, and esteems them as base and vile; yet here we see, the Lord loves them, and esteems highly of them, approves them as His, delights in them, to bless them and prosper them: *Touch not mine anointed, and do my Prophets no harm*; (2 Cor. 4. 13.) yea, he that toucheth them, toucheth the Apple of Gods eye, and no assaults whatsoever shall be able to injure them; *For Godliness hath the promise of this Life, and that which is to come.* (Mat. 23. 37.) And therefore let us labour to plant Godliness in our hearts, and to store them with true fear of God, and in so doing, the Lord will bless us and our poor endeavours.

This may serve to reprove the cursed practise of ungodly men: It is wonderful to see how bold they be to abuse Gods servants, to mock them and to disgrace them, to slander, and to revile them: They think them the worst men that live in the World, they

A great comfort to the Godly, that God doth approve of them.

they traduce them, and bring them on the stage, they load them with vile and odious names; Now what do they else then, but set themselves against God himself, seeing they hate and persecute them whom God loves.

And as this may serve for the terrour of the wicked, so it serves to comfort every poor child of God: What though the world hate thee, so God love thee: Oh remember that the Lord loves and allows of thee: Now then if God approve of thee, what though all men in the world did refuse or contemn thee? If the King should grace a man, and honour him, what would this man care for the contempt of a scullion boy? Well, let this be a comfort and encouragement unto us, that God knows and allows of us, For what were the favour and approbation of men, if this love of God were wanting.

Object. But how shall a man know whether GOD knoweth him thus, with his special knowledge or not? I answer.

Answer. 1. If God know any man for his, by his special and effectual knowledge, then he begets in him the knowledge of himself. As the light of the Sun falling on our eye, by whose light we behold the Sun again, *I know my Sheep* (saith Christ) *and they know me,* (*Joh. 10.*)

2. If God thus know any man by his special and effectual knowledge of his, so as he loves and likes of him, it begets the love of God in a mans heart: (*1 Joh. 4. 9.*) So as God loves him, he is inflamed to love God again, and in love unto him is loath to offend him, and most careful to please him. And therefore if we would know whether we be thus known to God, let us labour to find our hearts thus inflamed with the love of him.

3. Whom

3. Whom God knoweth thus, he chuseth to be his child in Christ Jesus, delights to bless him : Now then this works in the heart of a godly man another work ; namely to chuse God to be his God, to set his heart on him, to delight in him, to adore him as his God, to love him, fear him, obey and call upon him, and to trust in him as his God.

Thus you see how a man may know whether God know him with this special and effectual knowledge, which is proper to the Elect alone ; namely, by these fruits and effects in our hearts : For as we see, though every man cannot come to see the Kings broad Seal, yet can discern the Picture of it in wax, and say, this is the Kings broad Seal : So though men cannot ascend to Heaven, to know the secret Counsel of God, yet by these fruits and effects of his knowledge men may know his will, whether they be his, or not.

Well, to conclude : seeing the Lord thus knows and acknowledgeth, yea, loves and likes of the life of a godly and righteous man : let us be encouraged to go through stich, and to resolve of this, never to be daunted or discouraged with the hard measure of ungodly men. All our care should be to please God, and to be approved of him ; and therefore so long as he doth approve of us, and we are assured of his love in our consciences, let us not fear, nor think what man can do against us ; Fear not him that can kill the body, but fear him that can kill both body and soul, nor be afraid of death, for our death brings us to life ; we must all know this, that our death is necessary ; Christs death was voluntary, our death came to us by reason of our sin, Christs death came for our sins, and to redeem us from Death and Hell : Christ he arose from death left the linnen cloath, and the napkin which was about his head ; he left them behind him, because he had a more glorious apparel to put on, even the Kingdom of Heaven ; so must we ; if we will arise from sin by Repentance, we must forsake our old sins, our worldly lusts and
H cares,

cares, our evil thoughts; and like *Elisba* leave our earthly mantles, if we will go to Heaven, grace is the way to Heaven, glory is the end.

But the way of the Wicked shall perish.

Here we learn that the whole life of a wicked man, and whatsoever he doth is abominable, the Lord hates him, and all he doth, (*Esa. 66. 3. Jer. 8.*) *What have I to do with the multitude of your Sacrifices? saith the Lord.* And again, (*Prov. 15. 8.*) *the Sacrifices of the wicked are abominable unto the Lord:* Now, if the best actions of a wicked man, his hearing, reading, praying, and receiving, be abominable to the Lord, how much more his swearing, cursing, banning, prophaning the Sabbath, drunkenness, uncleanness, lying, stealing? &c. Again, (*Heb. 11. 6.*) *without Faith it is impossible to please God:* Now no wicked man can have true Faith, because *faith purifies the heart* (*Act. 15. 9.*) and is never severed from true Repentance and amendment of life: And therefore the way of the wicked, seem it never so goodly and glorious in the world, all their studies and endeavours shall perish, and come to destruction in the end (*Prov. 20. 17. Job 20. 29.*) *This is the portion of the wicked man, and the heritage that he shall have from God for his works.*

You may read in *Dan. 5. 33.* how *Belshazzar* King of the *Cal'dians*, for his wickedness was suddenly cut off, the Text saith, *the same night was Belshazzar slain*: that was at the same time, when he was drinking and carousing, and feasting with his other fellow Princes, the time was, the same night (as it were) to make up a perfect description of a miserable life; here the lines of adversity did fully meet, for calamity commonly follows the heels of vanity, and especially the foot-steps of wicked and ungodly men, who do not meditate and delight in the word

of God; punishment is, as it were the hand-maid to follow and wait upon wicked mens actions; therefore I desire your patience, that I may shew you a further description of this wicked King; Mark, I pray you; While *Belshazzar* was feasting, (*Dan.* 5. 33.) and his heart full of joy and delight; drinking healths with his Nobles and Concubines in the golden Vessels of the Temple, to the honour of his wooden and carved gods and images, at that very time, his loyns loosened, and his knees smote together, when he saw the hand-writing upon the wall: Observe I pray you, the same night, time sitting for such a sad subject to be acted in, for commonly all impieties, all wickednesses have their growth and beginning in the night. (*Prov.* 18.) *Solomon* saith, that the adulterer watcheth and waiteth till the twi-light before he can work his own desires: (*Mat.* 24.) Our Saviour we may read of, how the same night he was betrayed; still night work for such actions: again, God saith to the rich man in the Gospel, (*Luk.* 12.) This night shall thy soul be taken from thee.

Now mark, I pray you, the suddenness of Gods judgments; especially, when wicked men will not take warning, and be sorrowful for their misdoings, or once say, what have I done? the same night that he was in his jollity and pleasure, did this judgment come upon him. God gave this wicked King sixteen years together notice of his idolatry and sin: yet he went on in his wicked ways, nor would once hearken to the Prophets, nor of himself meditate on Gods Law, either day or night; and when wicked men will not as this King did, then doth God come suddenly and unawares, and in an hour (as our Saviour saith) in which he knoweth not of: So God sent the messenger of death to this King, at this very time, to render an account for himself at the Throne of Heaven: he whose Vice-gerent he was on earth; and whose authority he had so abused, loe now on a sudden, the same time, the same night when *Bel-*

Ishazzar least thought of it, came and demanded an account and reckoning of him for his Stewardship, who had lived 16 years in voluptuousness and in wantonness; yet my beloved, see Gods mercy in the height of his Justice, and how he mingles mercy with his Justice, though it were the same night; yet it was not at the same minute; God gave him warning before he cut him off for his loyns loosened, and his knees smote together; This shews, and teaches us, and all men, that God takes no delight in the death of a sinner, but that he should rather live and repent him of his evil ways: God always gave warning before he sent his judgments to be executed. God gave the old world warning by *Noahs* preparing of an Ark; and all the time it was building, every blow which was given with the hammer upon the Ark, (*Gen. 22.*) and every nail that was driven, was as so many Sermons of Repentance, or as so many warning pieces to look to themselves, yet they were never the better, nor once thought or meditated on it either day or night, (*Exod. 19.*) So likewise, God gave *Pharaoh* warning by *Moses*; saying, Let my people go: So God gave *Sodom* and *Gomerrab* the like warning; before he destroyed their City: (*Jonah 3.*) So likewise God sent *Jonah* to the *Ninivites* to preach to them that they should repent, saying, yet forty days before *Ninveh* shall be destroyed: So God did to this wicked and idolatrous King divers years together, yet like *Pharaoh* he hardened his heart, and did not obey the Lords voice: for which fault of his, he is suddenly stricken, and now made an ignominious spectacle to all his Nobles and Friends about him, and also to his enemies abroad: yea, while he was merry and in his cups, and had let loose the reins of his heart to entertain all joy and mirth, see what happened to him, a sudden judgment fell upon him, and the reason is, because he forgot his God, and took more delight in his Idol Gods: and he that had a Thousand Princes and Nobles attending at his birth, had

had not one friend to keep and defend him from that sudden storm : And he that will not take warning before, will repent afterwards when it is too late.

No merit in man can procrastinate Gods Judgments : Mans reason is pur-blind if we should question why God should so suddenly destroy wicked men for their sins, we are beholding to our selves for our sins, but we cannot be beholding to our selves for our salvation, for that is meerly out of Gods love and favour : Innocency we cannot plead, for we are full of sins, yea, laden with iniquity, and therefore have no merit in us to deserve Heaven. God for our sins and offences, could for the least sin dispatch us of our breath, and send us to hell at once, but when God comes once or twice by his Word and Ministers, and we will not hear him, the third time will be of a more dangerous consequence ; God hath come to us several times, yea, these many several years, by his judgments ! yea, lately he hath come, to the great amazement of all the World, when the boyling pot in the North was brimful, and yet it did not seeth over : swords drawn and yet put up again : this was a wonder, and a great mercy of God shown to us, and yet for all this we are never the better in obedience, but let us take heed of Gods re-access ; and that he doth not still find us fruitless, and without some shew of Repentance in our hearts for our sins : we are never afraid of the lash of Gods Judgments till they come upon us : or till we have some punishment or other powred upon our heads, we are never afraid till then, we are just like a top which little boys use, which will never run round till it be scourged and whipped : if ever we mean to find Gods favour, and that we would have him our friend, we must bring the Cup, which *Joseph* put in our Sacks mouth, that is it which we must bring back : which cup is meant our conscience, and till we bring Repentance with us, which is the Cup, we shall not have food, nor any other provision for our souls. *For the Lord knoweth the*

way of the Righteous, but the way of the wicked shall perish.

Therefore my dear brethren, let me intreat you, that St. Paul may be all our patterns : for, saith he, Brethren, be followers of me, and look on them, which walk so, (that is, in godliness) as you have us for an example, saith Saint Paul ; *For many walk, of whom I have told you of*, and now tell you weeping that they are, (meaning wicked men) the enemies of the cross of Christ : But I pray you my beloved, mark the course of their Life, whose end is damnation, whose God is their Belly, and whose glory is their shame ; and this is the end of all those who mind earthly things more than God : and to this purpose you may read, *Proverbs*, Chap. 11. Verse 16. That he that pursueth evil, (that is, walketh in his own delight,) pursueth his own death : and he that is a wicked man must needs be an envious man, and the envious man slayeth his own soul : *Cain* we all know, was both an envious man, and a wicked man, he was envious, and slew his Brother *Abel*, because his Sacrifice was better accepted at Gods hands than his was ; God for all this hath pardoned this sin of murder in him, and yet he proves his own destroyer, because of his despairing. *Cain* saith, *Every man that meets me shall destroy me* : God sets a mark upon *Cain's* forehead, that every man that meets him shall not kill him, and yet every man that *Cain* meets destroys his Soul. That is thus proved ; if *Cain* meets a good man, *Cain* envies that good in him, and by that destroys his own soul : Again, if *Cain* meets with a bad man, or wicked man, that delights to walk in wickedness, *Cain* approves of that wickedness in him, and delights in it, and follows it, and by that slays his own soul : So that whomsoever this *Cain*, an envious man sees, by him is his soul brought to destruction. So likewise of King *Herod* for his envy and malice shewed to the Apostle *James*, and for not giving glory unto God, was suddenly stricken dead ; like-

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wife *Julian* the Apostate or back-sliding, was on a sudden slain with an arrow from Heaven. We may read in our Chronicles, of a *Spanish* King, who blasphemously said, that if he had been at the making of the World, he would have told God how to have made some things better than they are, but his end was desperate, and he died lamentable: So likewise the ungodly and wicked Duke of *Bourbon*; who loved the pleasures of the World more than the glory of God, said publickly that he would rather leave his part in Paradise, than that in *Paris*: these are such wicked wretches which make a Land to mourn, and the people to commit whoredom and idolatry; and run on in their sinful ways, never saying, what have I done? but mark their end, they shall perish, and become as the dung of the earth, and afterward be flung into the pit of destruction.

We must all know, or at the least we ought to know it. God is like a man upon a high Tower, who can look down, and see what is done below; for Heaven is his Throne, and Earth is his Foot-stool, he is in the high Tower of Heaven, and can behold all our actions though never so closely kept, which we imagine none knows but our selves. God, I say can bring the devices of wicked men to nought; he can make the table of the wicked even as a snare to them; even a snare of the bread they eat at their Tables, for our history doth note, that a man was choaked with a crumb of bread, and another by a drop of water in the winter time, who looking or gaping up to the sky, a drop fell into his mouth, and suddenly freezing, cut his throat, and so he dyed: this God can do to wicked men, that they may be examples to others in this life.

God can turn a proud man into a Beast, as he did *Nebuchadnezzar* into an Oxe, the drunkard into a swine, the lustful man into a goat, the envious man into a wolf, the malicious man into a Tyger, and at length, turn them into hell for their wantonness and ungodliness.

God can make the stars in the Firmament to fight against wicked men, as it did against *Siferab*: *It is a fearful thing*, saith the Apostle, *for a wicked man to fall into the hands of the living God*. It is said that earthly Kings have long hands but short lives: but it is not so with God, he hath both long hands and long life, and will live for ever to punish wicked and ungodly men, and doth plentifully reward the proud doer: As God hath a cup of Salvation for all godly men to drink of, so he hath a cup of indignation, and his vials full of wrath for the wicked and ungodly man to drink of, which they shall drink down like water; it is not all the wit and policy that an ungodly man hath that can reprieve his life from Gods judgment.

St. *Ambrose* saith, night to night, and day to day, that is, Jew to Jew: and Christian to Christian: wicked man to wicked man, for so saith the Text: *The Lord knoweth the way of the Righteous, but the way of the wicked, and the way of sinners and ungodly men shall perish*; a Cock will not call them as it did *Peter*, nor a Whale to preserve them as it did *Jonah*; nay Gods word by his Ministers, that will not take them neither: *Simon* was so called because he slept when our Saviour watched, which was a sign of the old man that yet remained in him, but *Peter* was his new name by which he followed Christ: How easie it is when we are asleep, like *Sampson*, to have our locks cut off by the *Philistines*, how easie it is for a nail to be driven through our Temples by *Jael*; *Saul* when he was asleep lost his Spear, and his pot of water which was at his head, let us take heed that we be not found in this case, not to walk in the way of sinners, and so be lockt up in Eternal Death, which shall never have Life: Let us take heed how we walk in the way of the wicked, and how we keep them company: for we may take the Lords word for our Warrant, they shall perish in the end: We must not trust on earthly things, nor have confidence in Prin-

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ces, our chief hope must be on God, on Heaven, and Heavenly things : We must seek for the things above with diligence, and assiduity, and constantly : We must seek after it, and with the woman in the Gospel who had lost a piece of silver, light a candle, and sweep the house, that candle is the word of God, for the word and the law of God is light to our paths, and a lanthorn to our feet : We must not so much look for things temporal, as things eternal, that is the proper place where we shall find them : for what profit is it for a man to gain the whole world, and lose his own soul ? or what profit is it for a man to beat his brains, and sweat his brows for things of this world, which are so far from happiness, as he is still carking and contriving what to do with it, or how to bestow it ? say, we have got all the earthly things we can desire, we are not sure to hold them, or keep them : The rich man in the Gospel, when he had what he would have, had his Soul taken away from him the same night, then the goods may be whose they would : St. Paul counted the things of this life like dung and dross, to Christ who was in him.

The true cause of Gods punishment is for our amendment, and for a reward for sin which we have committed, we must forsake sin simply, and for it self, because it offends God : Man by nature is prone and apt to sin, and it is just with God to punish man for the same ; God for sin drowned the world, yet we may read what little good was wrought by it for all that great deluge : (for we do not read of any godly men :) So subject and corrupt man is to transgress, for when the deluge of Gods justice was dried up, then there arose another deluge out of the earth, even a deluge of wicked men, and full of all sorts of sins, which walked in their own ways and wickedness : for we may read as soon as the waters were dried up, then wicked men began to build, and make Towers which should reach up to Heaven, and to make molten and golden Calves, and to worship them, 1 King. 8. that

as soon as God hath taken off his hand of Justice, then do men forget their former punishments, and run on in their former wickedness, and forget God, but let all good men remember this, that their ways and their thoughts shall both perish, and come to a perpetual and fearful end.

Gods Word and his Law is like an Apothecaries shop, which a man resorts unto for cure and comfort ; for indeed, saith St. *Basil*, there is no true comfort to be had or found any where else, if not there : Truth is the Lords ballance, whereby he knows us, and tryes us whether we be weight or no ; Gods Word contains all truth ; and therefore God is true ; and the way of all wicked and ungodly men shall surely then perish : God himself saith, Heaven and Earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle of my word shall fail.

Riches are but as pawns, which wicked and covetous men trust and depend upon ; that is, when they have so many hundred pounds coming in, or so much Merchantable ware, or such a sum of Gold lying by them : then I say these wicked and ungodly wretches will trust in God, is this to be a true Christian, and to walk in the way of the godly ? No I say, suppose thou art driven away from thine own house into a far Countrey, what then, if thou be a true Christian thou wilt hope against or beyond hope ; hope on Gods promises, and on his word, that is, hope on God when all humane hopes are past, as *Jacob* did, as *Moses* did, as *Abraham*, *Joseph*. Now if Gods word be truth, let us be careful to follow this truth, and to walk in his paths, and obey this truth, for if we do not so ; Sin lyes at our doors, and we in danger of hell and damnation, because we believe not this truth, but shall perish and come to a fearful place of torment, which shall never have end : It is not sufficient that we hear Gods Word, and walk in his paths, and go to Church for company-sake, or for fashion-sake, as we call it, but we must keep

keep Gods word in our minds, and ponder it in our hearts, and lay it up in our bosomes, and practise it in our Conversations, and meditate on it day and night ; for I will tell you my dear Brethren, the word of God is of such power, that it is able to defend us from all outward dangers whatsoever ; But many men, in these our sinful days and latter times, upon whom the end of the world will fall, lay up their Bibles as they do their best cloaths from Sunday to Sunday, and never look in it, or on it, but follow their profit and gain, but the way of such men shall perish.

Sins are the Diseases of the Soul, and we have drunk of this cup of errour at the first when we were born, and we have no help left but by Jesus Christ, who is the Physician of our souls, and he must be applyed by the hand of Faith ; Men and Angels may pass by us, and look upon us, and cannot help us, as long as we are wounded with sin : As the man which fell among thieves : Say none can help us from our sins but this good Samaritan, he must come and pour in Oyl and Wine into our Consciences, which is the glad tydings of the Gospel, who have like Sheep gone astray : Therefore *David* desires that the Lord would seek him : *O seek thy servant who hath gone astray*, we all know that a Shepherd hath a voice, a staff, and a dog : God is like unto a Shepherd, he hath a voice to call us if we be within hearing ; a staff to fetch us in, when we are within his reach ; and a dog to bring us in when we are out of his reach : By his voice is meant his Ministers, by his staff is meant his Corrections, as by sickness or the like ; by his dog is meant Satan or Death, who can fetch us in, if the Lord give them but the liberty : Outward prosperity makes us forget God, and it makes us to go out of the way of Heaven : Therefore the wise man saith, that riches very seldom but is accompanied with pride and ambition, which makes a man most miserable, it makes him forget himself, and the hand that sent it, there-

therefore saith St. *Austin*, O Lord give me neither Poverty nor Riches, least by the one I be puffed up, or by the other caused to repine, but give me things convenient : Therefore O Lord give me first what thou requirest, and then require of me what thou wilt : Let us labour for that which is most profitable for our souls, for God is a God of providence ; He is the same this day and to morrow, and the same the next day, and for ever : Wicked and ungodly men will not trust God with no more than what they see, like some dull hawk that will not flye no further than while the prey is in sight, but will turn tayl : This is no true love that these wicked men bear to God, they trust to their riches, and think by that to be delivered in the day of trouble. But my beloved, let me tell you, that God is our best friend, and that Riches and Honour are but Gods vassals, and the favours which he bestows with his left hand upon the sons of men ; Riches cannot prolong our life, nor keep us from Death, nor Ransome our Souls from Hell.

The Devil can invite a man to sin, but force a man to Repentance he cannot, nor will not : Sin is the cause of all our sorrows, and that is the only cause which makes our wayes and our actions to be of no effect, but as the Prophet saith, shall perish : And till sin be removed Gods justice will not be abated : Let us display and rip up our Consciences, and confess our sins, and then we shall never perish in this world by the means of a horrid, and a distracted Conscience ; nor be thrown into the pit of horreur to perish there for ever, in the world to come : There is no man can cure the leprosie of the Soul but God alone ; none can cure or restore nature again to man, but the God of Nature : Let but man repent him of his sin, and God will be ready to forgive him his sins : Let but man perform his part, God will perform his, if we confess, he will be ready to forgive, for he is just, and will reward every man according to his works :

works : God hath given man both the power and the means to confess his sins in this World, which if we do unfeignedly, he will be faithful not to confound us in the world to come : And let me tell you this, that God is more merciful than man can be sinful : Look upon a persecuting *Saul*, who became a Preaching *Paul* : Look upon *Peters* denial of his Lord and Master ; Likewise look upon the Jews who Crucified the Lord of life, he forgave those that repented and were sorrowful, and had mercy even on them, who had no mercy to shew to him, who was the Saviour of the World : God hath a Sea of mercy to drown a world of sins and transgressions : Sin is a slave ; so saith St. *Paul*, he that commits sin is a slave to sin : Now the wages of sin is Death : Therefore let us forsake sin, least God forsake us, and so we perish like the wicked and ungodly men : Man hath his day, and then Gods day begins when mans is ended ; Therefore let us, while we have time, repent us of our evil and wicked ways, and turn to the Lord with all our hearts, and grow new men and women in Jesus Christ by regeneration and a new life.

The Lord saith to a sinner confess and be saved ; just like *Naoman* the Syrian, who was bid by the Prophet, go wash and be cleansed : God is not like man to take us upon advantages, as our Laws do : But if we confess we shall be saved ; for who doth not confess his sins, shall not prosper, but he that doth shall find mercy, as you may read in 1 *John*, Chap. 1. Verse 9. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and cleanse us from all our iniquities : *David* said, I will confess my sins, and thou forgavest me my transgressions ; We must not be constrained to confess our sins, as *Judas* did ; but we must do it voluntarily and freely : For God doth know the very bottoms and secrets of our hearts ; we must do as the prodigal Son did, saying, I will go and confess, and say, Father I have sinned against Heaven, and against thee, I am not now worthy to be called thy

thy son, make me as one of thy hired servants: Nor must we like *Adam* hide our selves from Gods presence, but like the Centurion, who said to our Saviour. I am not worthy thou shouldst come under my roof, and like *David*, who freely acknowledged his sin, saying, *Against thee alone have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight.*

The World and Devil may take away and deprive us of our Wealth, but they cannot take away a godly mans Faith; as the Devil did *Jobs* wealth; nay, Skin for Skin, and all he had. (*Job* 19.) For though, saith he, (meaning God) *he take away all; yet I will trust in him, though he kill me, yea, though Worms devour me, yet shall these eyes see him at the last day,* what a Faith had this good man *Job*? it buoyed him up, and held him from sinking even in the highest of his extremity: Faith is our shield whereby we defend our selves while we are in the Body of the Flesh, and therefore may all godly men say this, The Lord is our defence, and the horn of our salvation, and with *David*, *The Lord is my Shepherd; therefore can I want no manner of good thing.*

Therefore, my dear Brethren, let us go from sin to remembring, and say; What have I done all my whole Life that is past? let us forsake our sins, our sins of knowledge, our sins of ignorance, our sins of omission, our sins of commission, our close and our secret sins, sins that we have done to please our own selves, or sins that we have done to please others; for nothing is more profitable to a man then sorrow and penitence for sin: *Shilo* was the very place which God chose for himself: but when sin entered, and had possession, you may read the very words, *Esa.* 7. 12. *But go you now unto Shilo, where I sit my Name at first, and behold what I did to it, for the wickedness of my People Israel:* Can a Vine bring forth Figs, can Sin bring forth Righteousness; no my beloved; sin can bring forth nothing but death and destruction both to Soul and Body; what was the fruit of *Adam* and

and *Eves* sin, God told *Adam* that he should eat his bread with the sweat of his brows, and for *Eves* part she should bring forth her issue with sorrow and pain, which if he had done otherwise, he had been for ever happy, and never have known sickness nor death, nor anxiety of mind; and this is the benefit and fruit of sin; but where sin hath reigned, and Repentance begins to step in, there is the first sign of a godly mans regeneration, and turning to God; The Prophet saith, *Thou hast filled the Godly mans belly with thy hidden treasures*; such as were never known to the eye of man, for godly men, and such as learn to Repent-unfeignedly, shall be satisfied with Gods good pleasure: Therefore saith the Wise Man, O Lord, give me of the waters from above, and from beneath: First, from above, which is from Heaven, and then from the Earth below: The Waters from above, which is the Water of Life; such a Water that we shall never thirst again; that Water which the Cananitish Woman desired of our Saviour, even the dew of Heaven, which is the Spirit of grace, and the Spirit of Faith, and the water of the earth, let it be in every ones heart to be watered in this transitory life with the spirit of patience, and the spirit of meekness, as it becomes Christians.

Likewise let us again consider, that in a drowth of Summer, the Rivers and Springs are not able to quench the thirst of the Earth, unless it fall from above, so all our labour, all our actions, all our carking and caring, all our endeavours, our going to Bed late, and rising early, if they be without Gods Warrant, and without his Favour, all our labour is nothing worth; like water put into a cive, or like sand put into a bottomless bag; just like the worm in the Timber, that when no moisture is found, then it turns and moulders away to dust; so doth all our actions, especially, if God be not in our undertakings and ground of our wayes, we shall be like the ungodly, and our ways perish: The wicked man is like a green bay

bay-tree that flourisheth for a time ; but then turn thy face for a little while, and it is vanished.

Then likewise observe the just and upright man, for his actions tend to the same which he was made for, saying, Lord I will seek thy face : That man which lives in sin can reap no Fruit but Death ; for St. Paul saith, *The wages and reward of sin is death* : There is no true content and happiness in this Life, without the blessing of God ; for without Gods blessing on our endeavours, there is no blessing, though rich and worldly minded men think it a great blessing and happiness to get wealth, and to abound in riches, he thinks he shall by that means never be removed, because he hath all temporal blessings, and what his heart can desire, and being now possessed of all these earthly dignities, let him remember for all that, and for all his Riches, that he must give an account of his Stewardship, and come to Judgment, so saith the wise man ; but then on the other side, mark how God will bless the godly man, who sets not his heart upon the VVorld, nor upon Riches, but takes God for his defence, God I say will bless him in his house, in his VVife and Children, God will bless him in the field, and in the garner ; Loe thus shall the man be blessed that fears the Lord ; nothing that he doth but the Lord will prosper ; but the way of finners, and of ungodly men shall quite perish : for where the fruit of temporal things are, and man depends and trusts in them ; he soon loseth the savour and company of God : for what doth it profit a man to win the whole world and lose his own soul ? VVe may read of *Alexander*, the great Conquerour, that when he had conquered all the whole VVorld, sat him down and wept, when he knew he had another VVorld to conquer, even the Kingdom of Heaven, to gain that Kingdom, which must be taken of all Christians by violence ; even by the force and violence of our Prayers and Tears : But many men now a days never offer violence to Heaven by their Prayers and Alms-deeds ; but instead
of

of that, they offer violence one to another, and take one another by the throat, saying, Pay me what thou owest, or I will cast thee into Prison, and there thou shalt rot and consume before thou hast satisfied me. Are these Christians? No sure: yet they are Christians in name, but not in profession. Christ tells them that they must forgive one another, as our heavenly Father will forgive them: and we must do to others, as we would others should do to us; and be ye perfect saith our Saviour, as your Heavenly Father is perfect; alwayes abounding in good works: And let not the world make us forget God, nor our love to our Neighbours: Many men are troubled like *Martha*, with many things, but the Godly man like *Mary* hath chosen the better part, which shall never be taken from her; Alas my beloved, what can this transitory world afford us, only a little delight with sadness, a little joy with sorrow, a little pleasure with trouble of mind; it is but for a moment, and then all our pleasure ceaseth: so saith *Solomon*, *Vanity of vanity, and all is but vanity*: So the voluptuous Man thinks he walks in a circle, and imagines he shall never come to an end: but let me tell that worldling, that the work of vanity, and of pleasure is iniquity, for they draw sin upon their own heads, as with cart-ropes, and drink down sin like water. Therefore O my soul come not near such company, (*Gen. 42. 15.*) have no fellowship with such wicked men: *For their wayes shall perish*: It is dangerous for a godly man to live among wicked and prophane men, we may instance it in *Joseph*, as you may read in (*Gen. 42. 15.*) that as soon as *Joseph* was entertained into King *Pharaoh's* house, and became a Courtier, he could presently learn to swear by the Life of *Pharaoh*: as he did to his Brethren when they came to buy Corn in *Egypt*, saying, By the life of *Pharaoh*, ye are surely spys, and come to discover the nakedness of our Land.

Sathan, the World, Wicked, and ungodly men,
hold

hold together : Sathan he goes about dayly seeking whom he may devour : and seeking whom he can tempt by his allurements and baits which he lays in our ways : yea, he durst come to our Saviour Christ and tempt him : and as he thought, Christ when he had fasted so long together, to be then weak and glad of bread : so he thought himself at the strongest to attempt him, and to come with a stone to make bread, this was a strange one, nay, he comes to our Saviour with an IF, saying, if thou be the Son of God command these stones to be made bread ; a hard matter, bread out of stones, and if our Saviour will have any, he must cause it to be done also ; likewise, here the Devil ceased not, for he carryed our Saviour into an exceeding high Mountain, thinking by his arguments which he used to Christ, to tempt him, saying, all these will I give thee if thou wilt fall down and worship me : So the World doth deceive man, it tempts him to sin, and it bewitches his heart so, that it makes many men to fall down, and as it were worship the honour, the wealth, the pleasure, and delight of the World : The wicked faith, who will shew us any good ? What profit or what benefit will it bring us to serve God ? shew us that and then we will serve God ? or else, What Lord shall us controul ? And if any Prophet or Apostle will promise us these things, then they will obey God, and walk in his ways : they will not believe unless God give them an earnest penny. They will not like old *Abraham* forsake his house, and go into a strange Country.

God hath given man riches only to serve him, because he first gave it : But man serves his riches first, and then God afterwards : These ungodly men trust God but for their own ends : Like *Belshazzar*, who did carrouse and drink even till the hand-writing be upon the wall, and our sights : And like *Herod*, give no Glory to God when we speak with our Tongues, but take all the Glory to our selves, as *Herod* did, who gave no Glory at all to God, that was his sin, for sin

wounds

wounds the soul, and it makes a man a meer slave ; for a wounded conscience who can bear ? As long as Gods hand is upon the wall, sin will be grievous unto us : But if we will confess our sin, happy shall we be ; yea, happy is that man that can say by regeneration, that he hath no delight in sin : for in the end it brings both anguish and desolation to every soul that doth sin : Sin it self is bitterness, yea, it is a burthen , and such a burthen, that if we do not repent, and ease our selves of it, it will sink us down to Hell ; Therefore let the wounds that we have received by sin make us beware of the next blow that sin doth strike the Soul with : We are all sinners, even from *Adam* whose pure blood was tainted with sin for his Transgression and Disobedience of Gods command : The wicked man when he shall hear of Temperance , Justice, and Judgment to come, will then like *Felix* tremble, and like *Nebuchadnezzar*, whose loyns were loosned, and whose joynts were smitten together.

Oh it is a happy thing to forsake wicked mens company : and a joyful and comfortable thing to frequent godly and religious mens society : And with holy *David* and blessed *Samuel* say, Speak Lord, for thy Servant heareth : desiring the Lord to add one degree of Grace to another, till we become perfect and holy, even, as it should become Christians : the Grace of God is able to discover the depth of sin, for the Grace of God is of a purging and purifying condition : it will purifie the hearts from dead works ; and be more careful to observe and walk in Gods Commandments : as becomes good and godly men in this valley of tears : Now Godly men must not look for a Paradise on Earth ; for this world is but as a troublefom Sea, which the Wind and the storms and tempests do cause to -arise : the best of Gods Children are not without watery and earthly parts, which hinders them in their Voyage to Heaven : God hath but one Son which saw no corruption, but he hath none that are without affliction ; *Adam* for one transgression

gression had this sentence denounced against him : that with sorrow he should eat his meat all the days of his Life : Sin is like the Disease of Leprosie, which spreads all over the whole Body : So doth sin, it spreads it self over the whole man, into his heart into his understanding, and all his other faculties ; sin hath spread it self like the cloud, which the Prophet *Elijah* saw, which was no bigger at the first than a mans hand ; but it grew bigger and bigger, till it covered the whole Heavens ; so sin at the first was but little, because it was committed by *Adam* ; but as the earth increased, so sin spread it self over the face of the whole Earth : The School of Adversity is a Christians best University : The Children of God cannot be excused from troubles and afflictions in this life ; as you may read of *David's* troubles ; *Joseph's* afflictions ; *Job's* Adversities, what fiery Tryals did they pass ? and with what patience did they undergo it ? *Job* saith, O Lord thou hast made me to remember the dayes of my youth. Now afflictions doth make a man remember himself, and causes a man many times to look up to the hand that sent them ; affliction betters our understanding, it makes a man remember there is a Divine Power which rules above his humane reason : the gall of affliction purges the eyesight of our souls, the Prophet *Jeremiah* saith, I see a walking rod ; that is, affliction which hangs over the heads of all those that are in the sleep of security : Thy corrections have been my instructions, saith the wise man ; afflictions draw us out of the arms of this our old enemy *Satan* ; it draws the curtain of our eyes, that we may see our own miserable estates : Sin which cleaves so fast unto man by nature, must be purged by the fire of affliction, so that we may be purged and purified from our gross corruption : I will melt them, and try them, saith God, that I may purge them from their pollutions : Blessed is the man that endures temptations, for he shall receive in the end a Crown of Glory : We are chastened of the

the Lord; ſaith *St. Paul*, becauſe we ſhould not be condemned with the world, and periſh with wicked and ungodly men. Sufferings, and croſſes, and afflictions, and loſſes in this life, are but like Thorns in the fire, or under a pot, only a crack and away; And as there is a furnace of Gods children in this life of affliction, ſo there will be ſure a Tophet for the wicked in the life to come.

The wicked and ungodly men that live ſo at pleaſure in this life, do daily run into debt on Gods ſcore, and yet for all this, they ſleep ſecurely, and walk cheerfully: this ſhews that the Lot of the wicked is Eternal Death: I am the Smith, ſaith God, which blows the coals, and makes hot the Furnace of affliction: I Create the night and the day alike: I am he that brings darkneſs, even the darkneſs of affliction, God hath a hand in all our afflictions, for what croſſes or calamities befall us, either by the loſs of eſtate, or by wife or children, or good name, is ſtill by Gods permiſſion and providence, to make us know, that we are ſinful men, and that God is, and hath been provoked by us every day: for we load our ſelves with ſin, as a Cart is loaden in harveſt time with ſheaves. God, when he ſees a ſinner run on in his courſe of wickedneſs, then God draws out his hand out of his boſom, and makes ready his bow, and his arrows, and aims before he ſhoots, hoping of amendment: ſix days God made the world in, but he takes eight or ten dayes before he deſtroyes one City, yet forty dayes before *Niniveh* ſhall be deſtroyed: We muſt pray to God for patience, that we may bear our afflictions and chaſtizings patiently: Let me tell you, God hath not dealt with us as we have deſerved, nor hath he rewarded us after our tranſgreſſions: for God in the miſt of judgment remembers mercy, for ſo ſaith the *Pſalmiſt*, for there is mercy with thee that thou mayeſt be feared; for if God ſhould be extream to mark what we have done amiſs, who were able to abide it? God ſaith, I will be thy Father, and thou ſhalt

shalt be my Son; but if thou wilt not hear me, and obey my words, I will chastise thee with the Rod of affliction: though the Waters as the deluge of *Noah's* Flood prevailed over the Earth, and above it, yet in a short time they were abared: And as God hath lightning in one hand, so he hath rain in the other hand; As he hath fiery feet, so he hath a face like to the Sun, to shew mercy: thy comfort hath refreshed my Soul, saith Holy *David*.

And as God hath given us patience to endure unto the end, if we will labour for it, so he will deliver us out of all our afflictions in his good time, and when it pleases him; for he knoweth best what is fittest for us: God's love shall over-top all our sorrows; for when the Egyptian Task-masters laid the most burden upon the children of Israel, and did call them to account for their number of Bricks, and those to be made without straw or stubble; then did God deliver them out of all their troubles; then I say, did God step in, and give his assistance, when all humane help was past, then did God shew his power in mans weakness, and delivered them out of their bondage and slavery: therefore my beloved, remember this note of observation; that when God sends affliction, he then looks for an amendment at our hands; he doth not punish us for our destruction and confusion, but for our good and conversion hereafter, while we live in this world of sin and corruption: And such as will not take notice of his fatherly corrections in love, and for our good shall with the ungodly and wicked men perish and come to a fearful end, even hell-fire for ever.

Nothing was more comfortable to *St. Austin* when he was in affliction, than when he thought on the sufferings of our Saviour: therefore saith he, let not man be so ungrateful as not to return unto him some thing, even pure hands, and undefiled hearts. And before I conclude all, receive these few Contemplations. Troubles and tortures, calamities and crosses

(so that it is now grown to a Proverb ; *Pathmata, mathemata ; nocumenta documenta*) The Lords lashes are Lessons to lead us along the right and straight way to Christ, the true Sanctifier of our souls to all that believe in him.

David penning his sweetest and harmonious Psalm, *Psal. 52.* in his bitterest afflictions teacheth us every one, to profit by Gods Rod ; because that affliction bringeth home the Prodigal Son. *Luk. 15.* And maketh *Nebuchadnezzar* lift up his Eyes to Heaven, honouring him that liveth for ever. As many as be sons, must be scourged of their Father : there are none knowing God, but must look for Messengers to salute them, with shrieking sounds of sorrowful news. For our Learning it pleases God oftentimes to conclude the best peoples Lives with very sad ends : As we see in the Death of Jesus Christ, his best Apostles : Likewise *Jonathan, Lazarus*, and the Lords two Witnesses, *Rev. 11. 7.* Who having finished their Testimonies, are killed for so doing, and their Corps thrown into the streets of the great City ; the Gentiles in their courses three dayes and an half, not suffering their carcases to be put into their Graves : See how the Lord scourgeth deeply, where he loveth most dearly : stay but the Lords leisure, and he will undoubtedly comfort your distressed heart and mind, if you will patiently abide, seek and wait for him in the way of sincerity and truth.

Remember we should all, that Israels portion is not passed into by following of vain and unlawful pleasures ; not by embracing the Earth in our Arms, or sending out our Children by flocks to daunce after Musick : Till the Lords *Vae mane surgentibus* seize upon us : (*Esa. 5.*) Israels portion is not so easily come unto. There is no other way to the Crown, but by the Cross : We must suffer our afflictions as the good Souldier of Christ, before the Lord will receive us unto Eternal Glory. Learn we all therefore, that the Cross of Christ is the best School-master to bring us to

to Christ. As *Naaman* did wash ere he could be whole, so must good Christians be content to suffer Tryals.

Whilst God threatneth affliction to our flesh, he would have us to prepare Faith and Patience in our hearts, to entertain his chastisements with tears: The rod of God to man, is as the Press to the Grape; the Fan to the Corn, and the Fire to the Gold.

How was good *Jacob* troubled? first, to have his only brother (as it were) to swear his death; then to leave his Fathers house and home, Country and Friends, and to seek for services in the world abroad. Remember still Gods spy, (your Conscience in your bosom) sees you, and will be his secret intelligencer, (our Conscience, that will be undoubtably most true and faithful unto God) an intelligencer against *Achitophel*, *Haman*, *Shebna*, and others, yea, against thine own self, if thy soul be unsanctified: you must hunger after Heaven, ere it will be had. Our Heavenly Father correcting still whom he loveth and liketh; teacheth us not to despair of his fatherly favours, and friendly affections; but rather that he nutureth us for our Salvation, fining us as the silver; and choosing us in the fire, as the purest Gold: Mark Christs dealing with his chosen Members, by convincing their faults; when he chastneth us to break us of our evil ways, and thereby he bringeth us to Reformation, correcting all of us according to the quality of our offence: The hardlier we are broken from our sins, the heavier judgments will he lay on us, to work our deeper humiliation and repentance.

Fears shall make us to understand that which exhortations and gentleness could not bring us unto: We must be first humbled, ere we can be advanced and have fainting souls on Earth, before we can feel the high, holy, and helping hand of God from on high, to stay and heave us out of our distresses: Relye we still on God, and he will not forsake us in our dangers, but will give us still such pledges of his ne-

ver failing mercies, as may assure our hearts of greater in Heaven, where more joys are prepared, then we can either ask or once think of: It is well if we think sin to be the ground of your afflictions, and your offences the cause of Gods displeasure: wherefore he sendeth crosses and curses upon sinners.

Consider we first, how we have saine by wantonness of life, and ungodly conversation; our neglecting Gods Word and Will, hath brought the cup of Gods indignation upon us, to reclaim our feet from folly, and our souls from Hell.

Not to acknowledge our selves to have deserved Gods Judgments (because we yet feel them not) is pride of heart, and a state most perilous, until we be humbled.

God therefore pulled *David* down (though he were a chosen vessel) when he saw him walk awry. God corrects us to reform us, making his judgments as messengers, to recall us from sin, before he enter into judgment with us. Beware of grudging at thy crosses or afflictions, for our Heavenly Father useth them to amend us, not willing the death of any sinner.

We having all sinned, stand in need of this physick of correction to reclaim us from straying from our Heavenly Fathers dwelling; beware of being ashamed of our Fathers visitation: neither love we the pleasures of this world, more then the joys of Heaven.

Be we never ashamed of Gods Rod: for *David* confesseth, and saith (*Psal. 23.*) *Thy rod and thy staff comfort me:* the rod to correct me, when I am out of the way; and the staff to comfort and uphold me, when I am in the way: but entertain we his correction as a benefit and blessing sent from on high, profitable for our souls, and no way hurtful to our hearts: and still more and more fit you for the company of Gods children.

The more sorrowful and sick we are, the more
I like

like we are unto our elder brother Christ Jesus, who finished our Redemption through the Croſs, and made the way to the joyes of Heaven, through tribulation. Which way whoſoever is aſhamed to follow, can neither come to his Kingdom, nor ſet foot in the pallece of Gods moſt joyful inheritance : If any of you be wounded without in your body, be careful to ſee to the ſores of your ſoul.

I fear not but that the ſeeds of faith lye ſtill in ſome of our hearts : although the fruit thereof do not plainly appear.

If our Sons and Daughters have been dear unto us, how much more dearly hath Chriſt our Redeemer once bought with his blood, both our Souls and Bodies. I beſeech you hold it a joy to dye, and to be out of this ſinful world, and to be delivered from the thraldome of this ſorrowful life.

Death is our refuge, the help of our Souls to Heaven ; there we live Eternally where is no pain, but all pleaſure, no ſorrow, but ſolace ; no ſighing, but ſinging ; no fear of death, but aſſurance of everlaſting life. It is good for Gods children to be afflicted, that they may not ſtray from Gods houſe, but keep his word, and to learn and obſerve his Divine Statutes.

Though we have been long chaſtned of the Lord, but it is that we ſhould not be condemned of the Lord. Gods puniſhing us, doth with-hold us from Hell, ſtirring us daily and earneſtly to deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with Chriſt our Saviour in Glory.

Conſider I beſeech you, that when the earthly houſe of this Tabernacle ſhall be diſſolved, we have a building of God, an houſe not made with hands, but eternal in the Heavens : which whoſo inheriteth ſhall be eternally ſaved.

I entreat and adviſe every one, to be more careful of their ſouls than of their bodies, ſtill comforting their hearts in their afflictions, knowing that the ſend-

er thereof is God, and the causer thereof our sins. the longer we be and languish in sin, the more appeareth Gods love in our sickness: for the which think God to be the sender, and likewise our deliverer in danger and adversity.

As the Husband-man doth not put the sickle unto the corn until it be ripe; So doth not God inflict his grievous judgments upon us, until our sins do call down vengeance for the same.

Art thou desirous to avoid contagious diseases? see thou fear more thy sin than the infected City: Canst thou remove thy transgressions from the Lord? the Cities contagion shall not hurt thee: but if our sins remain unrepented, all the wholesome air in all the countrey cannot help thee or comfort thee.

In this World, we can see but Gods back parts, as *Moses* did, that is, but a little favour of God: but after this life is ended, we shall see God face to face, having the full fruition of him: as we therefore with the salvation of our souls, let us all beware of security, or to defer our Repentance, lest we be cast into hell-fire, having no lease of our uncertain lives.

Labour we all to have the candle of Faith burn in the lamps of our hearts, still nourished with the oyl of love and good works.

It may not a little comfort us in the time of our afflictions and troubles, that our Heavenly Father hath shewed such love unto us, that we should be called the sons and daughters of God. O what a comfort it is to our hearts and souls, that we pray not to an inexorable Judge, but to a most merciful Father who can deny us nothing, *Mat. 3. 9, 10. 1.* It is no impudency to call upon the Lord, we have his promise, *Ezek. 36. 28. That we shall be his people, and he will be our God for evermore.*

We have Christs warrant when we pray, to have the Holy Ghosts instructions, whereby we may cry, *Abba Father*: fearing God as our Master, and more reverencing him, then our Parents,

We that are Gods children should so esteeme of our tryals, as alwayes tending to his own glory, and our Salvation. The matter of temptation (I mean our own concupiscence) is in our selves ; the Devil brings his bellows to this fire, and it is forthwith kindled ; but craving grace to repel this power, we are not swallowed up of them, but freely de-

livered from the slavery of sin and Satan, *St. Augustine asketh,*

what our life is ? He answereth himself, saying, Arming to death, our life while it increaseth, decreaseth ; and when our life is during, our death is living.

This life is the time wherein we must be admitted into the Kingdom of grace, if ever we look hereafter to be in the Kingdom of glory and happiness.

All Gods children must in this world be tempted, that being tempted, they may resist ; resisting, they may overcome ; and over-coming they may be crowned : be not weary of painful walking to the Kingdom of Heaven ; fix your eyes on Christ Jesus, and never leave running until you come to him ; neither fear you any foe rising up against you, for the professing of Gods truth, so long as we may win Christ Jesus for our reward, Think not our selves to be fit stones for the Lords building, unless we be hewen with the axe of afflictions, and then slit through the heart with a saw of correction.

Whosoever will hereafter taste the sweet joys of Paradise, must first on earth (with Christ Jesus) tast of the cup of salt tears and afflictions with *David* : here he watered his bed, and hast thou none to bedew thy Couch with ? God would not afflict thee, but to wean thee from wickedness ; he would not have the weeds to over-grow the good corn, nor the Flesh to domineer over the Spirit : therefore by afflictions are we often brought to hate that which before we did love, and to embrace, what before we did loath.

Tribulation doth open the ears of the heart, which world-

worldly prosperity doth oftentimes shut: the Lord in mercy often chastneth here, that we might not be proud nor condemned with the world, 1 Cor. 11. 32. God woundeth us, not to make us worse, but wiser, that we might weep each one for our several sins and wickedness, which we have committed against our good God. Oh remember that the afflictions of the body is wholesome physick for the soul, it killeth the Flesh, but cureth the Spirit.

One compareth afflictions to the Gold-smiths forge, which tryeth the pure gold from the dross: or as physick expelling corrupt humors from the body: Or as a Shepherds crook whereby God bringeth again his wandering sheep into the fold: Sickness and sorrows are as a watchful rod to make us vigilant, that are in our selves naturally both sleepy and sluggish; You know this, that by afflictions are the children of God, and the sons of *Belial* taken notice of. We are oft therefore intralled, that our faith might be tryed, hope, love and obedience exercised, and our crosses cheerfully welcomed; sent of God for our good. Learning in affliction to abase thy self in the sight of God Almighty, acknowledging and confessing that earthly scourgings are but as flea-bitings in respect of the torments of hell, which by our lewd lives, for ever we have deserved.

Do you ask me, why God afflicteth you in this world? I answer, That the greatness of his power; and the infiniteness of his mercies might be shewed in the delivery of us, and such others.

There is no surer sign of the Lords writing your names in the book of Life, then this, that the Lord humbleth before he exalteth, and sheweth us our woful estate through sin by the Law, before ever he signifyeth unto us, that he is our salvation. And why dealeth God thus with his own children?

First, untill we be humbled, we never seek after Christ, nor desire him; without which we can never find him: For God hath appointed that by seeking, we should find him.

*From the Spanish Na-
ty in 88, from the Gun.
Trea. in 1605.*

A second reason is, that our redemption might be the more precious unto us, as our health is more pleasant after sickness, liberty after imprisonment, plenty after scarcity, and peace after war.

Thirdly, That Gods mercy in our deliverance, might be prized in his kind; the Redeemer in Heaven; for this especial cause, extol the Lord and the Lamb with

From the last great sickness, and many particular dangers. a perpetual Hallelujah: for an everlasting redemption, from an everlasting damnation, requireth an everlasting glorification.

This general truth is confirmed by a particular example. When the poor Jaylor was most grievously tormented through the horrors of the Law, before he could find his soul recovered by the salvation of the Gospel; *He cries, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* presently Paul and Silas told him what to do; *Even believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy Household.* And so I have done with these few contemplations.

But before I conclude all, let me give you some good instructions, that you may the better be prepared for the worthy receiving of the Holy Communion of the body and blood of Christ, therefore I will crave your patience, and beg your attentions to hearken unto them.

Instructions



INSTRUCTIONS

FOR

COMMUNICANTS.

IT is generally observed that matters of greatest consequence are never without some perplexed difficulty, not discernable by a sudden intuition, the mind of man being of a limited Efficacy, thereby unfit for any serious work, till first dispossessed of all different notions, repugnant indispositions, which might hinder or divert the performance of any great business set upon with sudden uncompos'd and uncollected thoughts; which observation rightly considered, I conceived that for the due and reverent receiving of Christs Holy Sacrament, his blessed body and blood, that preparative act of Examination to be of great consequence, it being a thing so comfortable to them which receive it worthily, and likewise very dangerous to those that receive it unworthily, therefore I thought it requisite to exhort you rightly to consider of the great dignity of the Holy Mystery, and the great peril that ensues to those that unworthily receive it. And by these few instructions which I have gather'd for the help and furtherance of all good Christians, to prepare your selves to be sound worthy receivers of this Holy

Communion. Almighty God prosper them unto you, and give us all his blessing, *Amen.*

IF you please to look into Holy Scriptures, you shall find Almighty God himself a pattern of deliberate preparation: for in making the world, if he had so pleased, he might at one command, have erected this glorious Frame at once, as to be six dayes in the fashioning of it, but only to exhibite unto us an example of temperate and advised proceeding in this great duty; first, provide the materials, and then superadd the accomplishment and perfection.

In *Solomons* Temple the stones were perfected, polished, and hewed, before they were brought to God's house, intimating unto us, it should be so in that Temple of which that was a Type, even the mystical body of Christ, every man should be first hewed and fitted by Repentance, and other preparatory works; before he approach to incorporate himself unto this spiritual and eternal building.

Our Saviour Christ in the Celebration of his last Supper would not have so much as the Room wanting or unprovided, but sent his Disciples before-hand to make preparations, *Mark* 14. 13. thereby signifying unto us that in sacred things there should be preparation before celebration. It was a Religious Observation of the *Roman* Superstitious Sacrifice, for a servant that stood by to put the Priest in mind what he was about, and withal to advise him to consider maturely, and to do with true affection what work he was then to perform, the Vessels and Garments in those solemnities used, before hand being washt and cleansed from soil? these things rightly considered, how ought every Christian soul to prepare, and thoroughly examine their Consciences, to judge themselves least they be judged, that so by contrition and true Repentance, with a detestation of sin, they may receive everlasting comfort to the salvation of their souls, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A Sacrament is that, whereby Christ, and his saving graces, are by certain external rights signified, exhibited and sealed to a Christian man. The Sacraments of the new Testament are two: Baptism, and the Lords Supper; the former at our entrance, the second during our continuance, in this Church Militant. In the Lords Supper, there is a sign, and a thing signified: The signs are Bread and Wine, the things signified are the Body and Blood of Christ, the Body broken is signified by the Bread; the Blood shed, by the Wine poured out, he that will receive this Holy Sacrament with due reverence, must conscientiously perform it by preparation, by meditation, by action or practise.

First then, you must endeavour preparation of your selves before you presume to come to that Holy Table. First, because there was a Commandment upon pain of death, (*Exod. 12. 48. Job 13. 4.*) that no uncircumcised person should eat of the paschal Lamb; neither should any circumcised person eat thereof without due preparation before hand; by the same reason we are bound unto a like due preparation before we come unto the Communion. Secondly, Christ washed his Disciples feet, before he admitted them to eat of his Supper; signifying how thou shouldest lay aside all unpureness of heart, and uncleanness of life, and be furnished with humility, and charity, before thou presumest to tast of his Holy Supper. Thirdly, It is the counsel of the Holy Ghost by St. Paul, (*1 Cor. 11. 28.*) Let every man examine himself, and so let him eat of this Bread, and drink of this Cup. Fourthly, God hath ever smitten with fearful judgments, those who have presumed to use Holy Ordinances without fear and due reverence: (*2 Cor. 30. 18.*) The fear of that stroke, made *Ezekias* so earnestly to pray unto God, that he would not smite the people, that wanted time to prepare themselves as they should, to eat the Paschever, and it is said, that the Lord heard *Ezekias*,

and healed the people ; Intimating, that had it not been for *Ezekiah's* Prayer, the Lord had smitten the people for their want of due preparation. Therefore I exhort you in the bowels of Jesus Christ, prepare holy vessels for these holy Mysteries ; Come not unto this feast without your Wedding Garments, for fear it be said, take him, bind him hand and foot, and cast him into utter darkness, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth : Put off your shoes, all your vain affections, for the ground where you stand is holy ground : How fearful is this place ? It is even the presence of the dreadful God : Hunt sin that devoured from works to words, from words to thoughts, from thoughts to every corner of your thoughts ; as *Joshuah* pursued *Achans* sin from Camp to Tribe, from Tribe to Family, from Family to Person ; let it have no starting hole. If it be a thing so dangerous to come unprepared, (some may think and say) it were better for me to forbear coming to the Sacrament. Obeware of that, that is a sinful resolution, and punishable with the great wrath of God ; witness the Holy Ghost in the ninth of *Numbers*, where it is said, that man that is clean, and is not in a Journey, and is negligent to keep the Passover, the same Person shall be cut off from his people, because he brought not the offering of the Lord in due season ; and Christ hath commanded thee to come unto the Communion, saying both himself in the gospel, and by Saint *Paul*, take, eat, do this in remembrance of me ; it was the greatest pledge of his love near unto his end, left unto his dearest children ; and wilt thou neglect or contemn so rich a Legacy, so good a gift ? wilt thou not be marked with Gods seal, that he may know thee to be his own ? Come, and come prepared thereunto. But thou saist, how shall I come prepared ? This preparation consists in the serious consideration of three things.

First, Of the worthiness of the Sacrament.

Secondly, Of thy unworthiness.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, Of the means whereby thou mayest become a worthy receiver.

First, For the worthyness thereof, the Author was Christ himself; and the worth thereof is discerned by the graces that are Communicated unto us, by and through the Lords Supper; for it assures us, that Christ is a propitiatory Sacrifice unto God for us, and a peace-maker between God and us: It confirms our Faith, assuring unto us all those saving Graces which are necessary unto Eternal Life, as Election, Redemption, Justification and Sanctification: Again, from this Communion with Christ, there springs a Communion betwixt Christians amongst themselves; He that loves not his brother cannot love Christ, saith *St. John*. Our Saviour prayed five times in the 17th. Chap. of *Saint Johns Gospel*, that his Disciples might be one, to teach us how much unity and concord pleaseth him, and how injuriously they torture their Mother the Church, (as upon a Rack) who break her swadling bands of peace. I could swim in a main Sea of comfort, while I speak of the worthyness of his Sacrament: It feeds our souls with assured hope of Resurrection, and of Everlasting Life; it binds all Christians by an Oath of fidelity unto the service of God for such high favours: Therefore Lord, evermore give us of this bread, I mean spiritual bread; (*1 Sam. 6. 11.*) if the house of *Obed-Edom* was happy by the presence of the Ark: (*Mat. 9. 20.*) if the diseased woman had her bloody issue cured by touching but the hem of Christs garment; how happy shall we be by receiving into our souls by Faith, the Body and Blood of Christ, as we receive Bread and Wine into our Stomachs?

The second thought which sanctifies thy preparation must be a consideration of thine own unworthyness, and that may be done if thou tryest thy self by the Ten Commandments, as by a touchstone, remembering what good thou hast omitted; and what evil thou hast committed; searching into the secrets of thy

thy heart with a curious eye, not sparing to plough up furrows in thine own soul : arraigning, accusing, judging and condemning thine own self, that thou beest not judged and condemned of the Lord, (1 Tim. 15.) saying in thy self heartily, (as the Centurion did) Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldst come under my roof. Give sentence of thy self (as Sr. Paul did) that thou art the chiefest of all sinners.

Yea, to thy comfort look into the words next going before, and thou shalt find that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners ; of the benefit of whose coming that thou maist be partaker, strive to be a worthy receiver of the Communion, which is the third degree of due preparation. Thou maist be a worthy receiver, if thou dost perform duties unto God, and unto thy neighbour. Unto God by knowledge, by faith, by repentance : Knowledge must lead the way ; for an house cannot be built, unless the Foundation be laid ; so neither can Religion stand, unless it be grounded upon the knowledge of Gods word, a fearful thing for them who make themselves strangers in the Courts of our God. The daughter of knowledge, must be Faith, not that of Devils, to know that Christ is, but that of Christians, to know that he is thine : That true faith is never barren, but it will shew it self by repentance, therefore rent thy heart and not thy garment : Thy Saviours new Wine, his Blood, must not be put in the old bottles of thy corrupt Nature : 1 Cor. 5. 8. The Pascheover must not be eaten with sower herbs, his Sacrament not received with the sower leaven of malice and wickedness, but with the sower Herbs of Repentance, and a fellow feeling of Christ his bitter passion ; ravel out by confession that which thou hast spun out and woven by ungodly practice : Thy duty unto thy neighbour is charity, forgiving as thou wouldst be forgiven, not taking him by the throat for one Talent, when thy Master hath rased many of thine out of his debt-book ; but if thou have any thing against him, leave thy gift at the Altar, and go and be recon-

reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift. You have the preparation before you receive; now observe the meditation while you are receiving.

It must consist of great humility: Say with *Solomon*, is it true indeed, that God will dwell on the earth? Behold, the Heavens, and the Heaven of Heavens are not able to contain thee, how much more unable is this house which I have built? And of a Faith striving with God, like him in the Gospel, who cried with tears, I believe, Lord help mine unbelief. And of a great joy, how blessed am I, who am called to the Lambs Supper? And of most serious thankfulness for the stamp of so glorious a seal upon so base and sinful mettle; seeing in the Eucharist, as God lays down unto us a pledge of his favour, so we return another to him of our thankfulness, and obedience (*Zaccheus*-like) in the very act of the only business, be thou mounted up (as he was in the fig-tree) from the earth, and all earthly affections; Receive Christ into thy house, restore where thou hast wronged, redeem Gods favour which thou hast lost by thy grievous sins; and in the very act, pray that thou mayst be in travel of a new soul.

The third branch of reverence due unto this Holy Sacrament, is action and practice after the receipt thereof.

First, the same day in celebrating it holy unto the Lord; like *Joseph of Arimathea*, lodging Christ in a new Sepulchre, in a renewed heart; perfuming the room with a sweet smelling incense of prayers and praises.

Secondly, Never after returning like dogs and swine unto your vomit, and wallowing in the mire, for then (like prodigals, who wilfully robbed themselves of their inheritance) you pluck off the Seal annexed unto the Indenture; you trample under foot Gods Seal set unto his Word, both which tender unto you assurance of your Salvation. If you think of receiving the
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the Sacrament, and then of returning unto sin again, like them that drink and vomit that they may drink afresh, you do but delude your selves; for the Surgeon can never cure the wound so long as the dagger that made it remains untaken out. Thus by preparing, meditating, and good living, learn to discern the Lords Body, know that common Bread, and common Wine by that holy use be made not common, lest receiving them unworthily, you be as guilty of the Body and Blood of Christ, as the Jews were who crucified him. Wash your hands in innocency, and so come before Gods Altar; so shall Christ your well-beloved be yours, and you his. *Amen.*

These few Lines are not a stream wherein an Elephant may plunge, but a shallow Brook wherein Lambs may wade. if any Dove, like *Noahs Dove*, (any simple and well-minded man) can take no footing, (I mean, not understand or mis-understand) my house hath a door like the window in the Ark, and I have a hand to reach out unto him, and succour him; the fountain of all goodness make me a faithful conduit pipe, and you careful and happy Cisterns of grace. Unto these seeds of Religion, let God say, increase and multiply; first, unto the blade or flower of knowledge; Secondly, unto the fruit of Reformation. *Amen.*

A Morn-



A Morning Prayer for a Family.

*Lord teach us to pray, that we may call upon
thy Name : Prepare our hearts to seek thee :
And open thou thy merciful ears to hear us :*

O Eternal and ever-living Lord God, Creator, and continual Preserver of all things both in Heaven and Earth : By whose gracious providence as we were at the first wonderfully and fearfully made, so we are no less preserved and kept unto this present ; We the workmanship of thine own hands, desire to humble both Soul and Body before thee. And now Lord, we being here in thy presence, cannot but acknowledge and confess against our selves our own unworthiness to come before thee, to call upon thee, or to perform even the least duty that shall concern thy worship or glory. Our hearts alas, are no better than sinks of sin, and a mass of all pollution and uncleanness ; and who can make that clean that is taken out of an unclean thing ? The thoughts and imaginations of the same must needs be evil continually, and we unto every good work prove Reprobates. Yet, O Lord, seeing thou hast commanded us to call upon thee, and hast mercifully promised to be present with thy children, to hear their prayers, and to grant their requests which they put up in Faith unto thee ; Oh Lord,

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Lord, this doth give us boldness to come before thee; and in confidence of thy goodness that thou wilt make good the same thy promise unto us at this time, we here offer up unto thee this Morning Sacrifice of Prayer and Thanksgiving, humbly acknowledging and confessing from the bottom of our hearts, our manifold transgressions and offences, which we have continually multiplied against thee in thought, word and deed, from the beginning of our days unto this present time. We acknowledge, O Lord, that our Original corruption, in the which we were at the first conceived and born, and from the which there hath sprung forth the most bitter and unsavory fruit of sin, Apostacy and Rebellion; to the great dishonour of thy Name, the wounding of our poor souls and consciences, and the evil example of others amongst whom we have lived: By the which, O God, we confess that we have justly deserved that thy wrath and indignation should be poured out upon us, both in this life, and in the life to come.

And therefore O God, we come not here before thee in our own worthiness, but in the worthiness and meditation of Jesus Christ: Beseeching thy gracious goodness for his sake to be merciful unto us, for his sake to forgive us all our offences, our visible sins, our secret sins, our sins of infirmity, our presumptuous sins, against knowledge, against conscience, against thee, or against our brethren, in the time of our younger years, or in the dayes of our knowledge, as we must needs confess, that in many things we have sinned all. We pray thee, O God, for Christ Jesus sake to forgive the same unto us, and perswade our souls and consciences more and more, that thou art at peace with us, and that all our sins are done away in the blood of thy Son. And grant, O God, by the assistance and direction of the same thy Spirit, that with more freedom of mind, and liberty of will we may serve thee in righteousness, and true holiness unto the end of our days. And good Lord, begin
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Morning Prayer.

not only repentance, and true Conversion in us, but of thy great mercy perfect the same: O lead us forward more and more towards perfection, increase in us that saving knowledge of thee, and of thy Son Christ, our faith in thy promises, our Repentance from dead works, our fear of thy holy name; our hatred of all sins, and our love unto thy truth. Frame our weak hearts (good Lord) more and more to obedience unto thy Holy and Heavenly Will; and teach us in all things to resign our will unto thy holy will; and in time of affliction, as in time of prosperity to depend upon thee; that we look not too much upon our own weakness, but may stay our selves by thy power and promises.

And good Lord, comfort our sorrowful hearts, and dejected souls, that find dayly such cause of humiliation in our selves, doing dayly those things which we should not, and leaving undone those good things thou commandest. O then let us be truly humbled for the same, and for thy mercies sake give us better affections unto goodness, and power and ability to do that good thou commandest and requirest at our hands; that seeking in all good things to honour thee, and to extol thy name while we live here, we may at the last behold thy face in glory.

And now Lord, together with our prayers, We are bold to add these praises unto thy great Name, for the manifold favours and blessings, the which from to time thou hast bestowed upon us for this life, especially for a better life. We thank thee for that it hath pleased thee of thy gracious goodness to elect and chuse us to Salvation before the World was, for calling us by thy word in time, for justifying us by thy Son Christ, and for giving us a certain expectation of a better life when this is ended. As also for the happy means of our Salvation, thy Sabbaths, Word, and Sacraments. Oh, it is thy great goodness, O Lord, that thou hast not deprived us of them all, in as much as we have from time to time walked so unworthy

Morning Prayer.

worthy of thy love. O lay not to our charge our great unthankfulness that we have not brought forth more fruit of thy word in our lives ; but give us, we pray thee, that for the time to come we may make more right steps to thy Kingdom. And we magnifie thy name, O Lord, for all the Temporal Blessings, which thou hast in mercy bestowed upon us, our health, peace, food, raiment, and for all the comforts of this Life : O Lord, give us a right use of them, that we may not abuse them unto licentiousness, but stir us daily by them to devote our selves unto thee and thy service. We acknowledge thy goodness towards us the night that is now past, freeing us from many imminent dangers, both of soul and body, and giving us sweet and comfortable rest. We beseech thee be with us this day, and all the dayes of our lives, and teach us to walk as children of the light, that thy name may be glorified by us, others may take good example, and we our selves enjoy the peace of a good conscience ; so as at the last, we may come to reign with thee in Glory.

Bless the Churches and Kingdoms wherein we live, with the continuance of our peace and true Religion, be gracious unto them that are in chiefest Authority over us : Bless all other Magistrates, Ministers of thy word, our afflicted brethren in body or mind, or both ; let it please thee O Lord to stay them, and support them in time of their distress, and give unto them a happy issue out of the same, as it shall seem good unto thee. And fit us for harder times, whensoever it shall please thee to bring the same upon us : And keep us Lord in those dayes by thy mighty power. And thus have we commended our suits unto thee, humbly praying thee to pardon our wants, now at this time in the performance of this duty. And thou that art privy to our wants better than we our selves are, we pray thee take notice of them, and minister unto us a gracious supply in
thy

Morning Prayer.

thy own due time: even for Jesus Christ's sake, in whose Name we conclude these our weak imperfect Prayers, in that perfect form of Prayer which he himself hath further taught us, saying, *Our Father, which art in Heaven, &c.*

An

An Evening Prayer for a Family.

O Lord prepare  hearts to Prayer.

○ Eternal God, and our most loving and merciful Father in Jesus Christ; and in him our Father: It is thy own Commandment that we should call upon thy name, and it is thy gracious and merciful promise, that where two or three are gathered together in thy Name, there thou wilt be present amongst them, we thy poor and unworthy servants, dust and ashes, yet the workmanship of thine own hands, are bold to come before thee, to offer up unto thee this evening Sacrifice of Prayer and Thanksgiving. And now, O Lord, being here before thee, we cannot but acknowledge and confess even from the bottom of our hearts against our selves our own unworthiness, that we are grievous sinners, conceived in sin, and born in iniquity, and whereof we have brought forth most vile fruits in our lives, to the great dishonour of thy Name, the utter dismay of our own Consciences, and the evil example of our Brethren; by the which we have deserved likewise thy wrath and heavy indignation to be poured upon us, both in this life, and that which is to come, in such sort as no creature in Heaven and Earth is able to reconcile us again unto thy Majesty, but only thy Son Jesus Christ: we intreat thee therefore, O Lord, to be merciful unto us; and as we acknowledge our sins unto thee, so be thou faithful.

Evening Prayer.

faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness: wash us thoroughly from our wickedness, and cleanse us from our sins; for we acknowledge, O Lord, that against thee we have sinned, and done our evils in thy sight. Thou hast been a guide unto all our wayes, who alone art the searcher of the heart, and the tryer of the Reins: To thee therefore O Lord do we come, to crave the pardon of our sins, both for the guilt and punishment of the same, that so they may not draw down upon us our deserved judgment. And we entreat thee likewise as to pardon our sins that are past in our lives, so to arm and strengthen us against sin for the time to come. Oh, we have woful experientie in our selves of the weakness of our Nature, how ready we are to fall from thee, and cannot keep so constant a watch over our own wayes, nor over our own hearts: but still are ready to start aside: O Lord direct us aright in the paths of thy Commandments, let thy good Spirit lead us forth into all truth, and these hearts of ours that by Nature are so fraught with sin and wickedness, we pray thee alter and change: And bring into subjection dayly every thought, and whatsoever thing else is in us, into faithful obedience unto Christ: Let us find dayly more and more the power of Christ's Death, mortifying sin in us, and the efficacy of his Resurrection, raising us dayly out of the Grave of sin unto newness of Life: and give us Lord that we may dedicate our selves, our souls, and bodies, to be lively, holy, and acceptable Sacrifices unto thee: Let thy love be shewed unto us, constrain us to love thee again. Thou O Lord hast made us, and not we our selves; thou hast made us not beasts, but men and women, yea, after thine own Image: thou didst preserve us in our mothers womb, and didst nourish us when we did hang upon the breast; thou hast still in mercy provided for us, and heaped upon us many blessings, which others want and stand in need of. O Lord, grant us a right use of all thy mercies,

Evening Prayer.

cies, especially for that thou hast let us live in such a happy season of thy Gospel, in a time of peace and prosperity, wherein thou dost by thy word continually call at the door of our hearts, and labourest our conversion. O Lord, we can never sufficiently admire thy goodness herein, and the rather, because we have from time to time walked so unworthy of love. Forgive us, O Lord, our unthankfulness herein, and let us now walk as children of the light. Oh, it is too much, Lord, that we have spent the time that is last past, according to the lusts of the flesh; give us Grace that we may spend that short time that yet remaineth, according to thy will: set before our eyes the shortness of our lives; the day of death is sure in the end, unsure in the time, that we may be fully prepared for the second coming of our Saviour unto judgment. And now in the time of our prosperity, Lord teach us to think of the time of adversity, and in the time of our health let us remember the time of our sickness, and the hour of Death which shall come upon all flesh. Oh, let us be mindful of our latter end, let us number our dayes aright, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom, and ever mind our reckoning and account which one day we shall give unto thee. Make us while we live here to be humble-minded towards our brethren, that we be lowly in our own eyes, that we get contented hearts, pure affections, chaste minds, and wise behaviour, and all other gifts of thine own Spirit, that may adorn us in thy sight, and may add unto the credit of thy truth which we profess.

And good Lord, we pray thee accept of our thanksgiving unto thy Majesty for all thy mercies and blessings from time to time bestowed upon us for this life and for a better. We praise thee for our election, vocation, justification, sanctification, continual preservation, and the assurance that thou hast given us of a better life when this is ended: as also for all temporal blessings, Health, Peace, and Prosperity.

Evening Prayer.

for thy goodness extended towards us this day that is past, that thou hast gone in and out before us, and freed us from many dangers of soul and body, and brought us with peace and comfort unto the beginning of this night. Lord, watch over us by thy Spirit and presence : Give us an Holy and Sanctified use of our rest and sleep, and fit us for the duties of the next day, especially, O Lord, fit us for that day which shall never give place to night : and grant unto us all good things that thou in thy wisdom knowest more expedient to give than We to ask, even for Jesus Christs sake : to whom with thee, O Father, together with the blessed Spirit, we acknowledge to be due, and desire to give all Honour, Praise, and Glory, both now and for ever. *Amen.*

F I N I S.

For the good land extended towards the east, and
past, and that half gone in and out before us, and
lived as from many dangers of soul and body, and
thought us with peace and comfort into the town
of this good land, wash over us the day
of tribulation: Give us the Holy and generous
and rest and sleep, and as for the times of the
year day, O Lord, for us for that day
which shall never give place to night, and grant un-
to us all good things, that thou in thy wisdom know-
est more expedient to give than we to ask even for
these things, O Lord, to whom with thee, O Father,
together with the Holy Spirit we acknowledge to
be God, and have in thee all Honors, Praises, and
Glory, both now and for ever. Amen.

25 DECEMBER

